DR ROBERT ELSIE – SHKRIMTAR, PËRKTHYES, SPECIALIST I STUDIMEVE SHQIPTARE

Born: June 29, 1950,
Vancouver, Canada

Died: October 2, 2017,
Bon Germany
Buried in Theth, Albania

DR. ROBERT ELSIE, A TRUE LOVER OF ALBANIAN CULTURE AND HISTORY

Dr. Elsie studied at the University of British Columbia and graduated there in 1972 in Classics and Linguistics, and carried out research at the Free University of Berlin, the University of Paris IV, the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes in Paris, the Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies in Ireland and the University of Bonn, where he finished a doctorate in Linguistics and Celtic Studies in 1978 and the Linguistics Institute of the University of Bonn.

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, he traveled to Albania and Kosovo where his passion for the exotic country and its little-known culture was awakened. After learning the Albanian language, he resolved to devote himself to Albanian Studies as an academic discipline and later became a leading expert in the field.

He is the author of over sixty books and countless articles, mostly devoted to Albanian Studies.

DR. ROBERT ELSIE, A STUDIUES I DASHURUAR I KULTURËS DHE HISTORISË SHQIPTARE

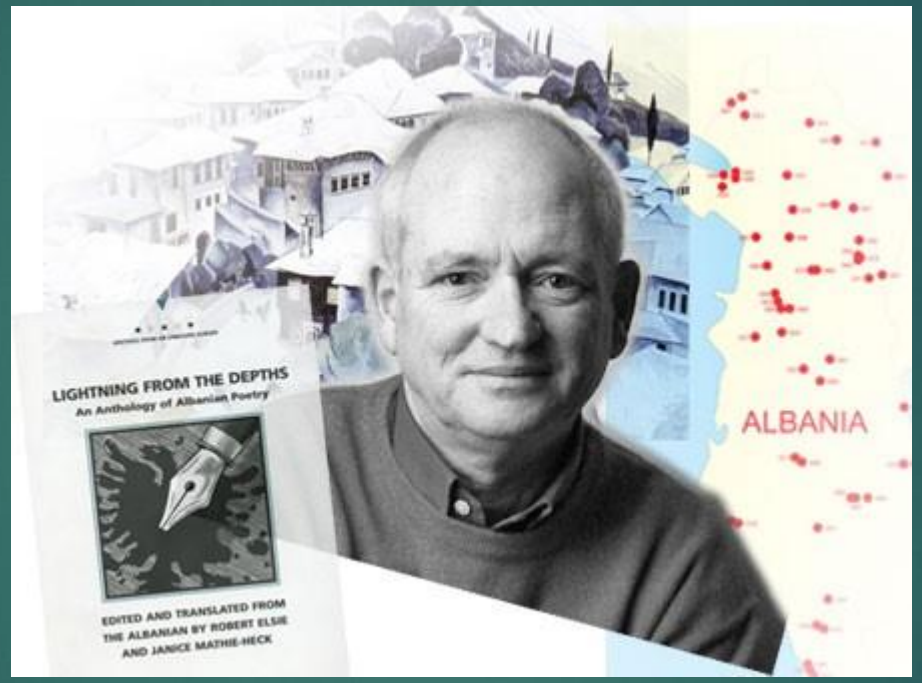
Dr. Elsie studioi në Universitetin e British Columbia dhe u diplomua atje në 1972 në Klasik dhe Gjuhësi, dhe kreu kërkime në Universitetin e Lirë të Berlinit, Universitetin e Parisit IV, Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes në Paris, Instituti i Dublinit për Studime të Avancuara në Irlandë dhe Universitetin e Bonit, ku ai mbaroi një doktoraturë në Gjuhësi dhe Studime Keltike në 1978 dhe Institutin e Gjuhësisë të Universitetit të Bonit.

Në fund të viteve 1970 dhe në fillim të viteve 1980, ai udhëtoi në Shqipëri dhe Kosovë ku u zgjua pasioni i tij për vendin ekzotik dhe kulturën e tij pak të njohur. Pasi mësoi gjuhën shqipe, ai vendosi t'i përkushtohej Studimeve Shqiptare si një disiplinë akademike dhe më vonë u bë një ekspert kryesor në këtë fushë.

Ai është autor i mbi gjashtëdhjetë librave dhe artikujve të panumërt, kryesisht kushtuar Studimeve Shqiptare.

A LIFE DEDICATED TO ALBANIA AND ALBANIANS

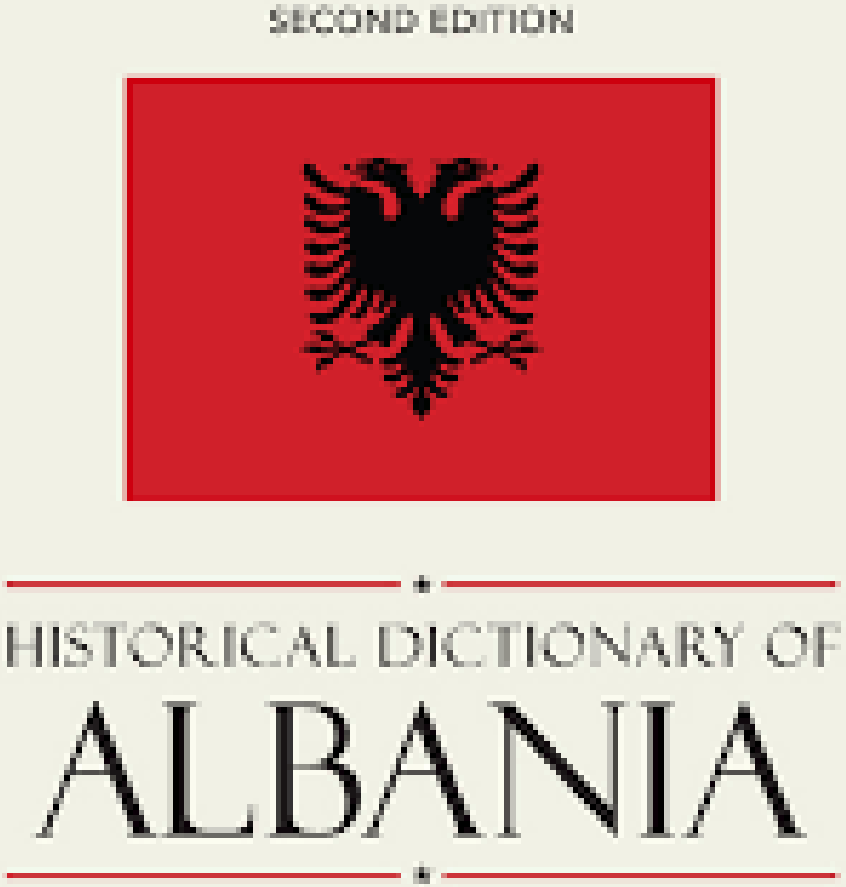
Si njësi gjeografike dhe kulturore dhe si shtet, Shqipëria u shfaqet historianëve si enigmë dhe shpeshherë injorohet. Në shekullin tetëmbëdhjetë historiani anglez Eduard Gibon (Edward Gibbon, 1737-1794) e përshkroi si një vend "në fushëpamje të Italisë, por më pak të njohur se brendësitë e Amerikës."



As a geographical and cultural entity, and as a nation, Albania has often been enigmatic and somewhat misunderstood. In the eighteenth century, English historian Edward Gibbon (1737-1794) described it as "a land within sight of Italy and less known than the interior of America."

DR ELSIE'S SOME OF 51 BOOKS ABOUT ALBANIA

- Overview of his Scholarly Works
- In his scholarly pursuits in the field of Albanian Studies, Elsie devoted himself initially to literature. Among his early publications were a Dictionary of Albanian Literature, Westport, Connecticut, 1986 and a two-volume History of Albanian Literature, Boulder, Colorado, 1995. This work appeared in Albanian as Histori e letërsisë shqiptare, Peja 1997, and (Outline of the History of Albanian Literature), Torun 2004. Dr Elsie has written 51 books on and about Albania in every filed, language, history, culture, arts, ethnography, etc. He is one of the most productive foreign authors who contributed to the Albanian history.



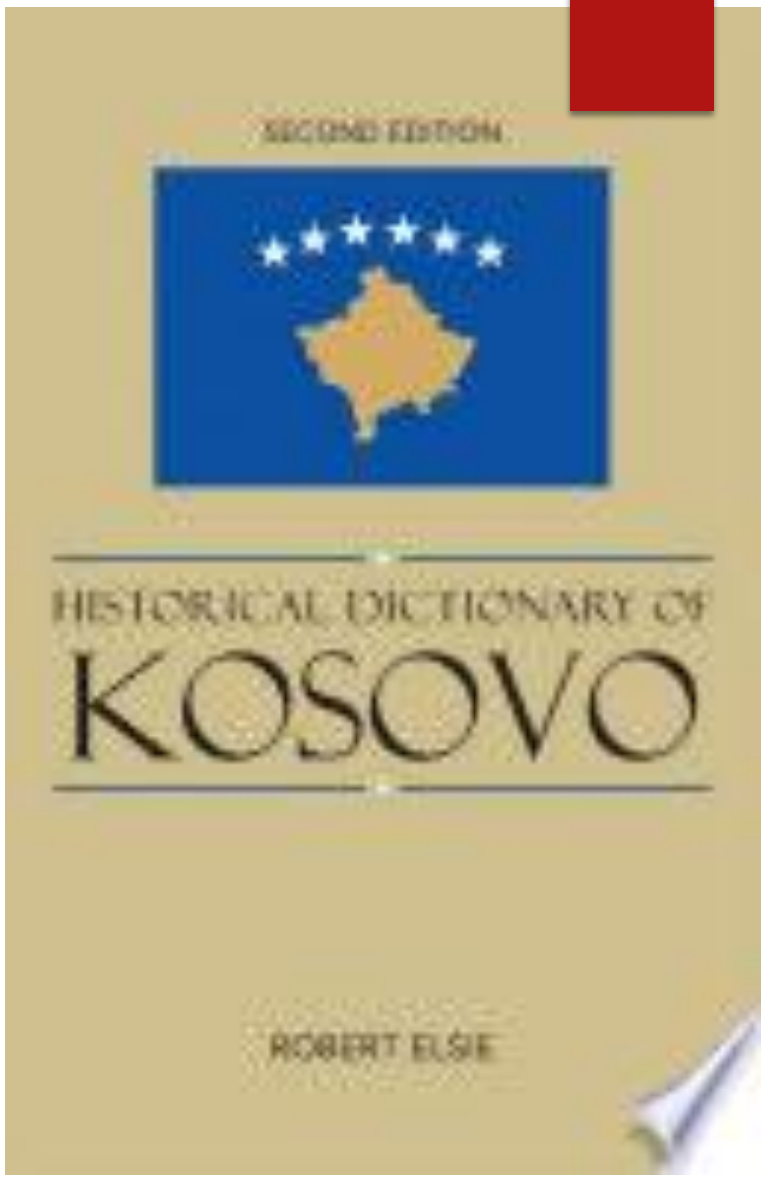
THE HISTORICAL DICTIONARY OF ALBANIA

- The Historical Dictionary of Albania, provides a comprehensive overview of Albanian history as well as contemporary Albania as it enters the twenty-first century. The dictionary focuses on both the past and the modern European nation struggling to put its formidable Stalinist history behind it

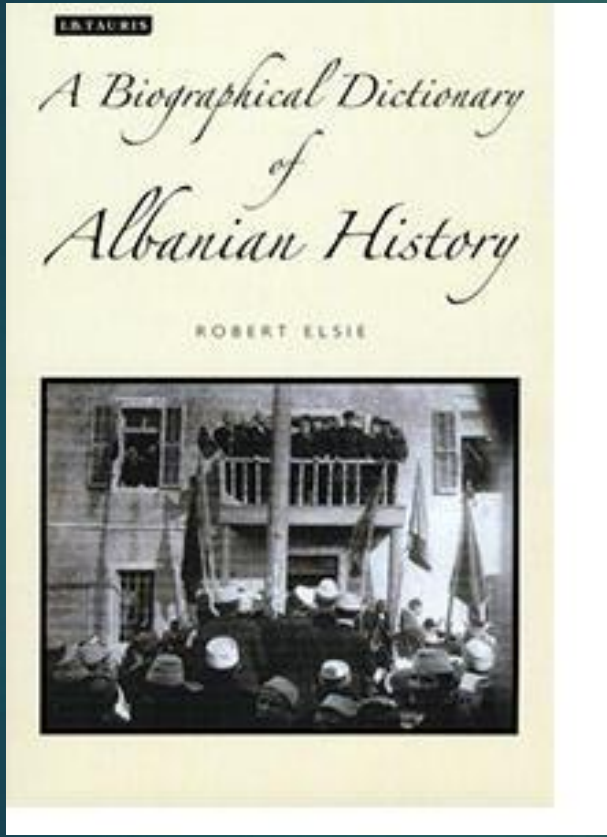
The majority of the more than 700 entries in this dictionary comprise historical and contemporary public figures and political leaders, as well as individuals, Albanian and foreign, who have made notable contributions to Albanian studies and culture. The entries cover history and politics, culture and religion, foreign relations, language, economics, and social customs. Additionally, the Historical Dictionary of Albania includes a further dimension - Albanians living outside the country, whether as part of an earlier diaspora or cut off by artificial and sometimes contested borders. A large portion of the material in this dictionary has never appeared in English, this book makes the elusive Albanian nation far more accessible.

HISTORICAL DICTIONARY OF KOSOVO

Kosovo is the newest country in Europe. Kosovo declared its independence from Serbia on February 17, 2008. Focusing not only on Kosovo's turbulent recent years, the second edition of the Historical Dictionary of Kosovo also relates the country's rich culture and long history. This is done through a chronology, an introductory essay, an extensive bibliography, and over 400 cross-referenced dictionary entries on significant persons, places, and events; institutions and organizations; and political, economic, social, cultural, and religious facets. This book is an excellent access point for students, researchers, and anyone wanting to know more about Kosovo.



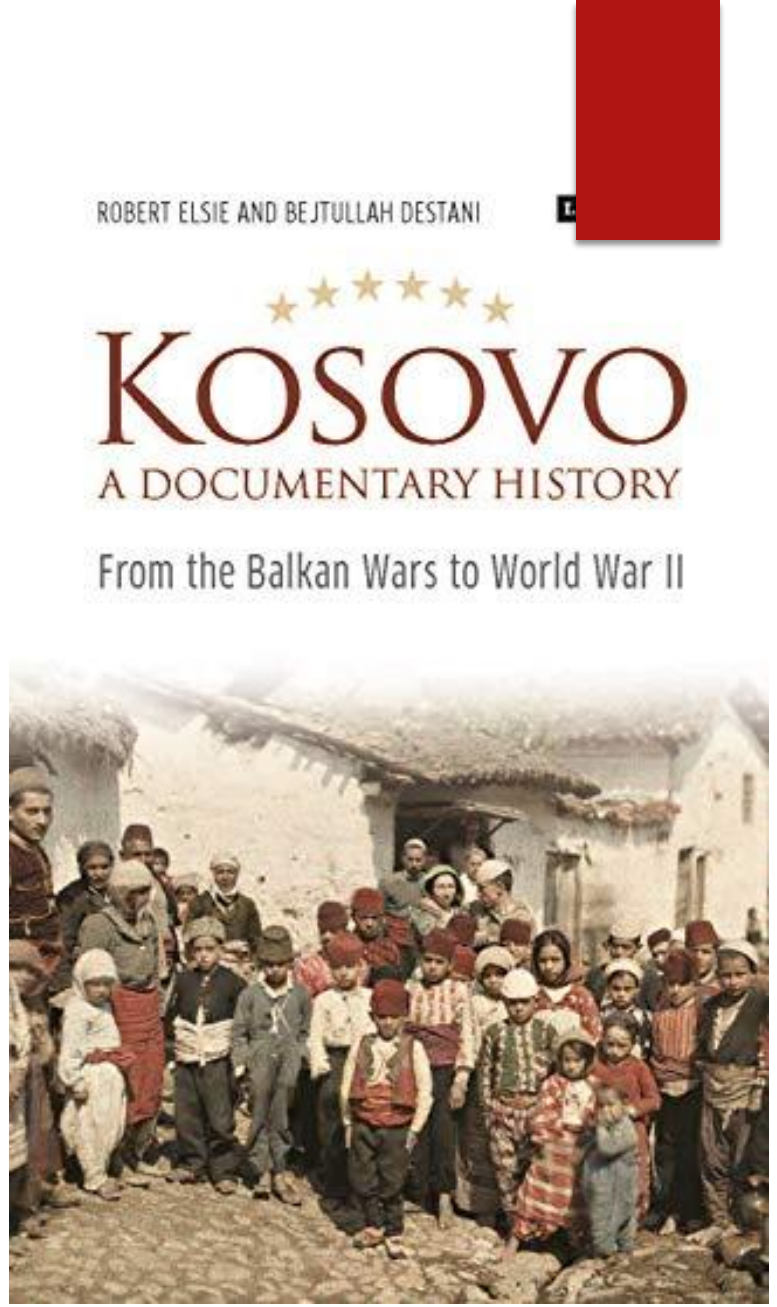
A BIBLIOGRAPHICAL DICTIONARY OF ALBANIAN HISTORY



Albania is not well known by outsiders; it was deliberately closed to the outside world during the communist era. Now it has thankfully become free again, its borders are open and it can be visited, and it is increasingly integrating with the rest of Europe and beyond. Albania is, in essence, a European nation like any other and will soon, it is to be hoped, advance and take its proper place in Europe and the world. The Historical Dictionary of Albania relates the history of this little-known country through a detailed chronology, an introduction, a bibliography, appendixes, and over 700 cross-referenced dictionary entries on significant persons, places, and events; institutions and organizations; and political, economic, social, cultural, and religious facets.

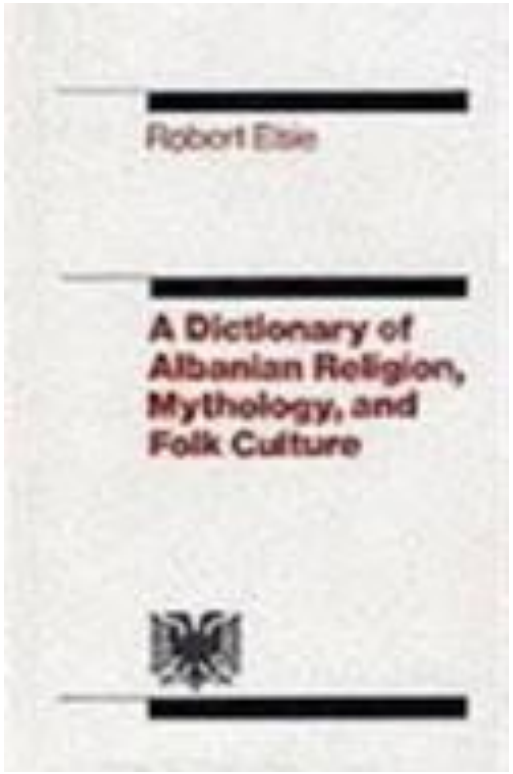
KOSOVO A DOCUMENTARY HISTORY

▶The question of Kosovan sovereignty and independence has a history which stretches far back beyond the outbreak of war in 1998. This volume is a compilation of key documents on Kosovo from the first half of the twentieth century. These texts, including numerous diplomatic dispatches from the British Foreign Office, deal initially with the Albanian uprising against Ottoman rule in the spring of 1912 and, in particular, with the period of the Serbian invasion of Kosovo in late 1912 and the repercussions of the conquest for the Albanian population. The documents from 1918 to the early 1920s focus mainly on endeavors by Albanian leaders, including those of the so-called Kosovo Committee in exile, to bring the plight of their people to the attention of the outside world - endeavors which largely failed.
Further documents reflect the situation in Kosovo up to the outbreak of World War II. This collection provides new perspectives on the Kosovo question and includes many documents which have been largely unavailable up to now. It sheds new light on many of the major and minor episodes that channeled and determined subsequent events, including the Kosovo War of 1998-1999 and the declaration of independence in February 2008.



A DICTIONARY OF ALBANIAN RELIGION, MYTHOLOGY, AND FOLK CULTURE

- This dictionary makes available for the first time a broad range of knowledge unknown or little-known to the western world, and indeed much information that is now lost to present-day Albanians. As such, it serves as a basic work of reference for readers and scholars specializing in the societies of the Balkans, th study of religious and anthropology.

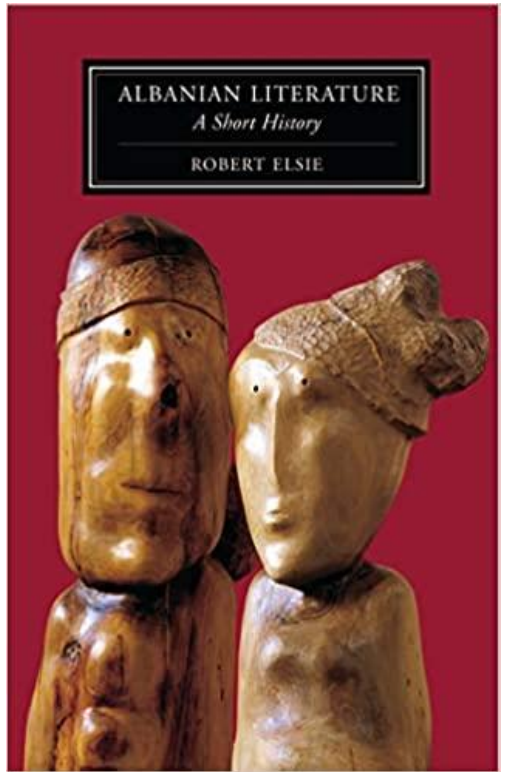


EARLY ALBANIAN BIBLE TRANSLATIONS IN TODHRY SCRIPT

- The copybooks with Bible translation in Todhri script that the Austrian consul, Johann Georg von Hahn, came across during his travels through Albania in the mid-nineteenth century were long regarded as lost. Their discovery in the Austrian National Library, after a century and a half of oblivion, could rightly be described as a sensation for Albanian studies. These little copybooks have previously never been transcribed or translated. Indeed they have probably not been read and used since the nineteenth century. Todhri script was an original Albanian alphabet invented and used in central Albania in the eighteenth century. The last person to write in Todhri script is said to have died in the 1930s.

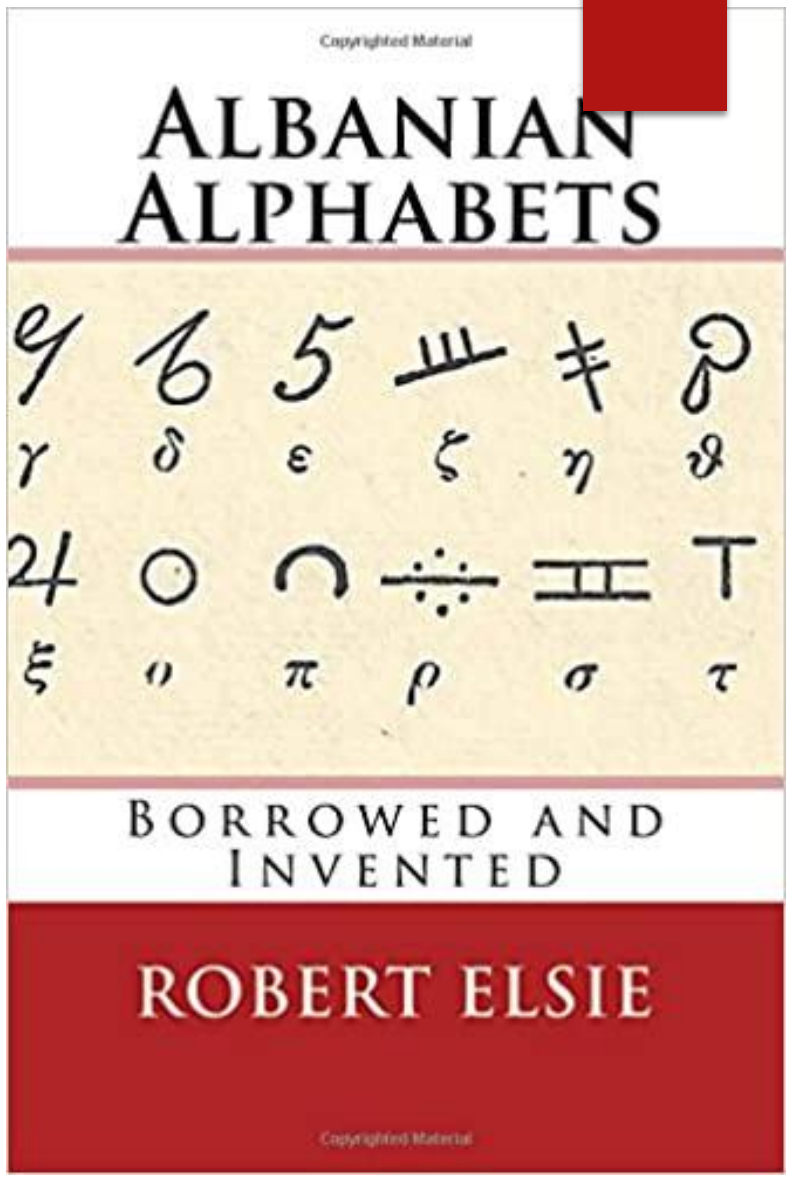
ALBANIAN LITERATURE – A SHORT HISTORY

- Very little is known or has been written in the English-speaking world about Albanian literature. Its fate followed the brutal course of Balkan political history. Despite its tumultuous history, Albania has nonetheless produced writers of the highest caliber, such as A.Z. Cajupi, Gjergj Fishta and, of course, Kadare. Albanian Literature: A Short History is a unique work of reference, which provides a concise and complete overview from the thirteenth century to the present day.



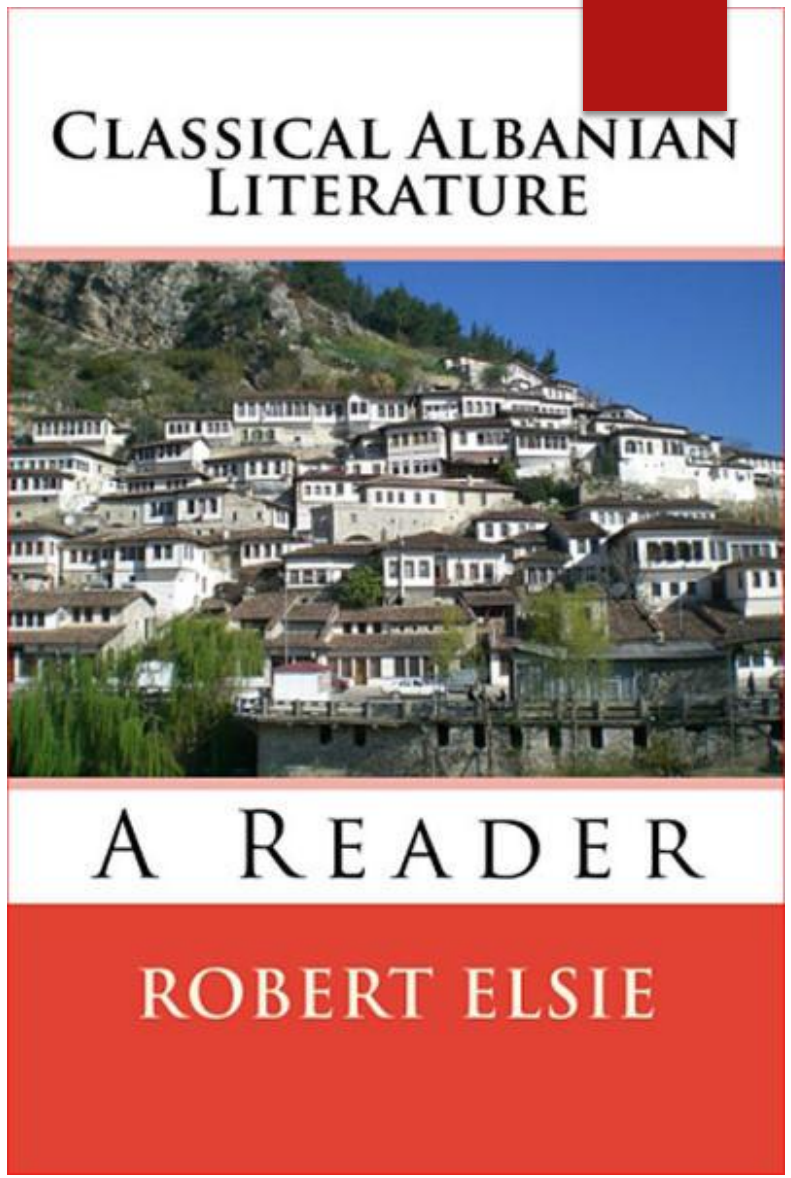
ALBANIAN ALPHABETS

▶The hundred years between 1750 and 1850 were an age of astounding orthographic diversity in Albania. In this period, the Albanian language was put to writing in at least ten different alphabets – most certainly a record for European languages. This book introduces the diverse forms in which this old Balkan language was recorded, from the earliest documents to the beginning of the twentieth century. They consist of adaptations of the Latin, Greek, Arabic and Cyrillic alphabets and, what is even more interesting, a number of locally invented writing systems. Most of the latter alphabets have now been forgotten and are unknown, even to the Albanians themselves.



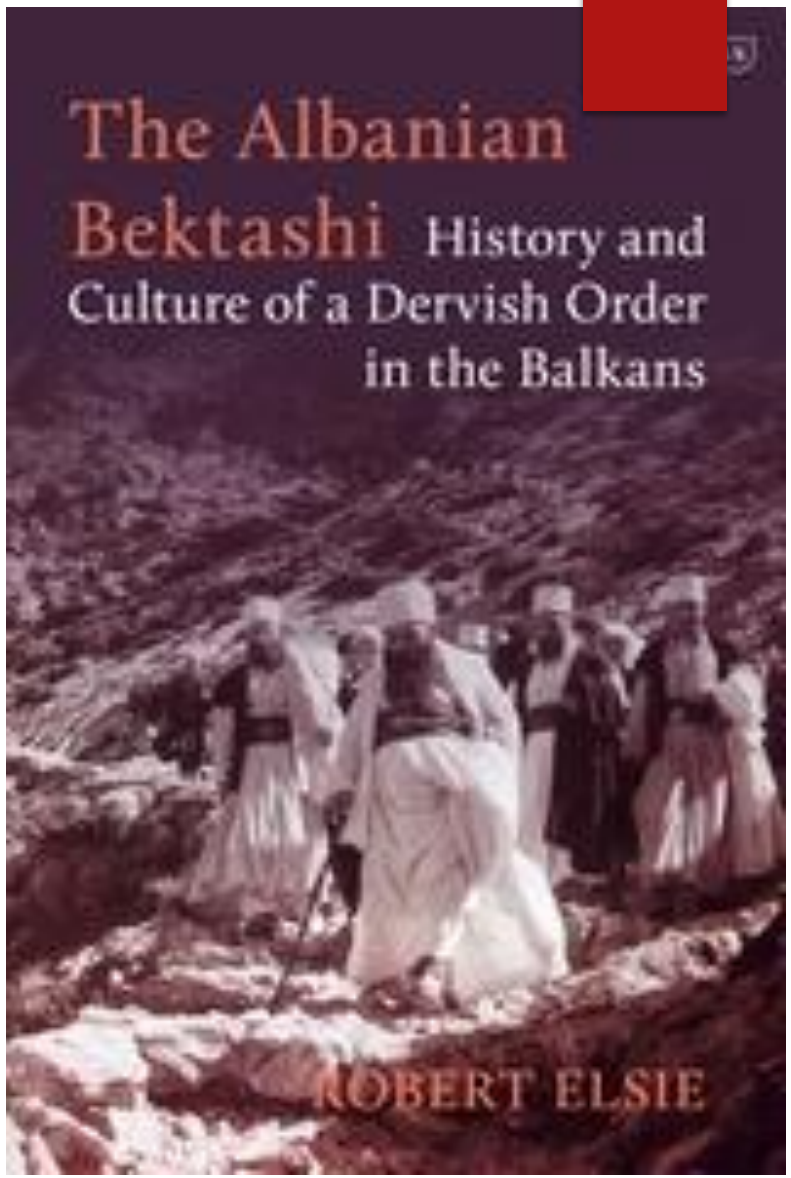
CLASSICAL ALBANIAN LITERATURE – A READER

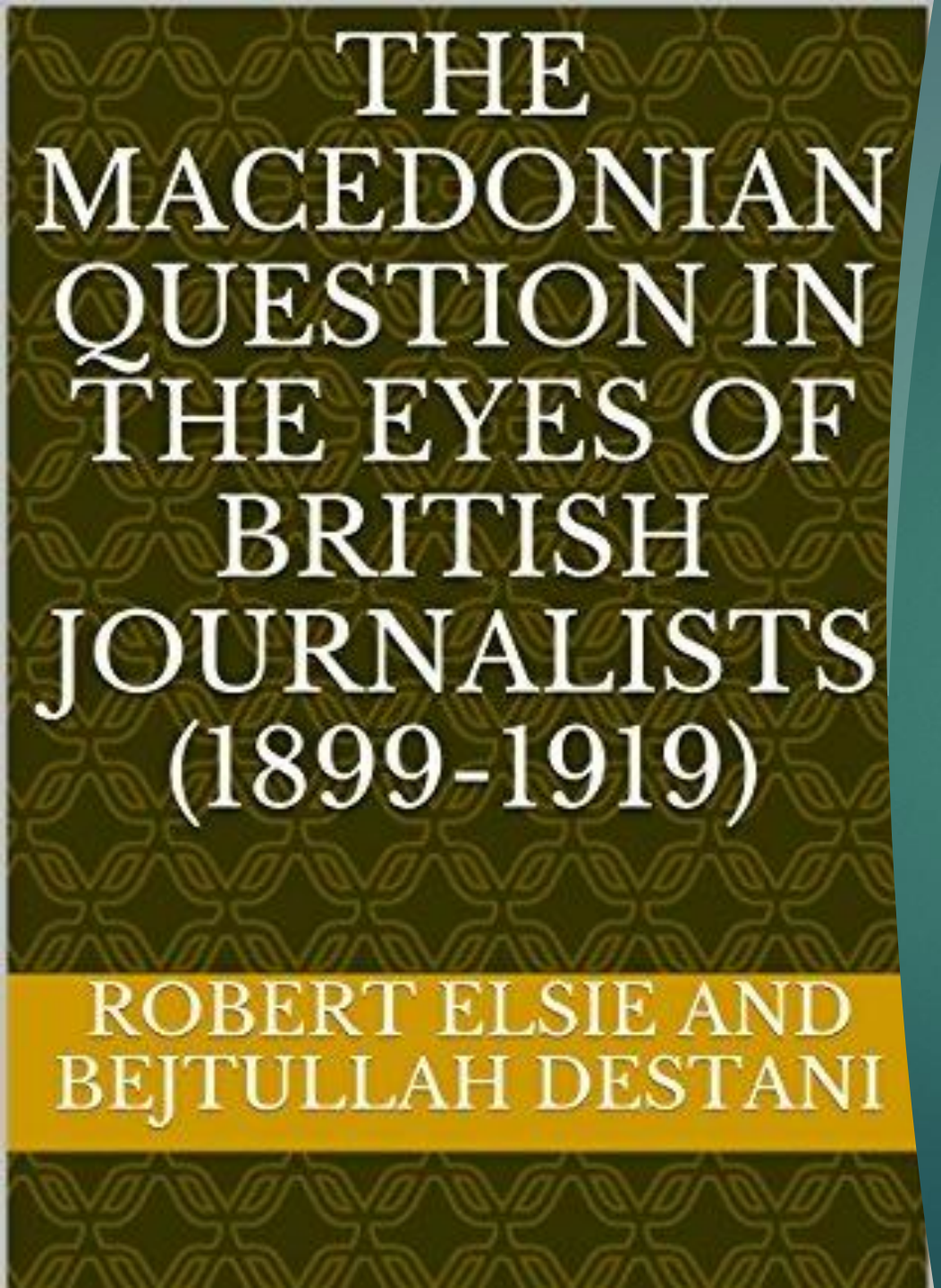
▶This reader presents the best of classical Albanian literature, from the end of the nineteenth to the middle of the twentieth century. It includes the best-known works of the age, poetry in particular. After a sluggish start, Albanian literature flourished in the 1920s and 1930s. By the mid-1930s, it reached a zenith, when intellectual life in the country was finally on a sound footing. A modern literature had been created in Albania and the nation had come of age. Alas, it was a brief blossoming in the shadow of the apocalypse which loomed in the form of the Stalinist regime that seized power in 1944 and would snuff out all genuine literary production for decades to come



THE ALBANIAN BEKTASHI – HISTORY AND CULTURE OF A DERVISH ORDER IN THE BALKANS

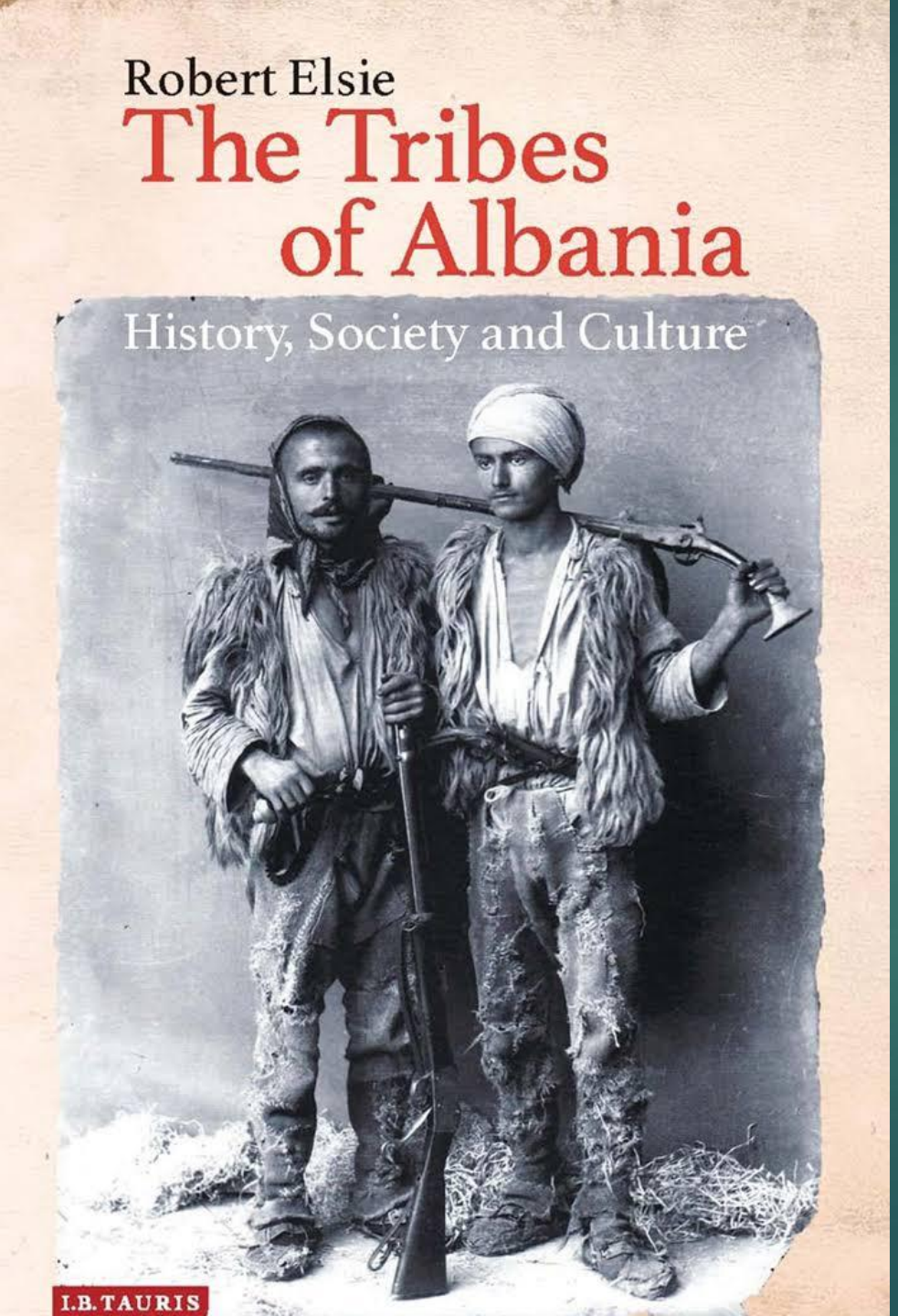
- The Bektashi dervish order is a Sufi Alevite sect found in Anatolia and the Balkans with a strong presence in Albania. In this, his final book, Robert Elsie analyses the Albanian Bektashi and considers their role in the country's history and society. Although much has been written on the Bektashi in Turkey, little has appeared on the Albanian branch of the sect. Robert Elsie considers the history and culture of the Bektashi, analyses writings on the order by early travelers to the region such as Margaret Hasluck and Sir Arthur Evans and provides a comprehensive list of tekkes (convents) and tyrbes (shrines) in Albania and neighboring countries.
- This book provides a complete reference guide to the Bektashi in Albania which will be essential reading for scholars of the Balkans, Islamic sects and Albanian history and culture.





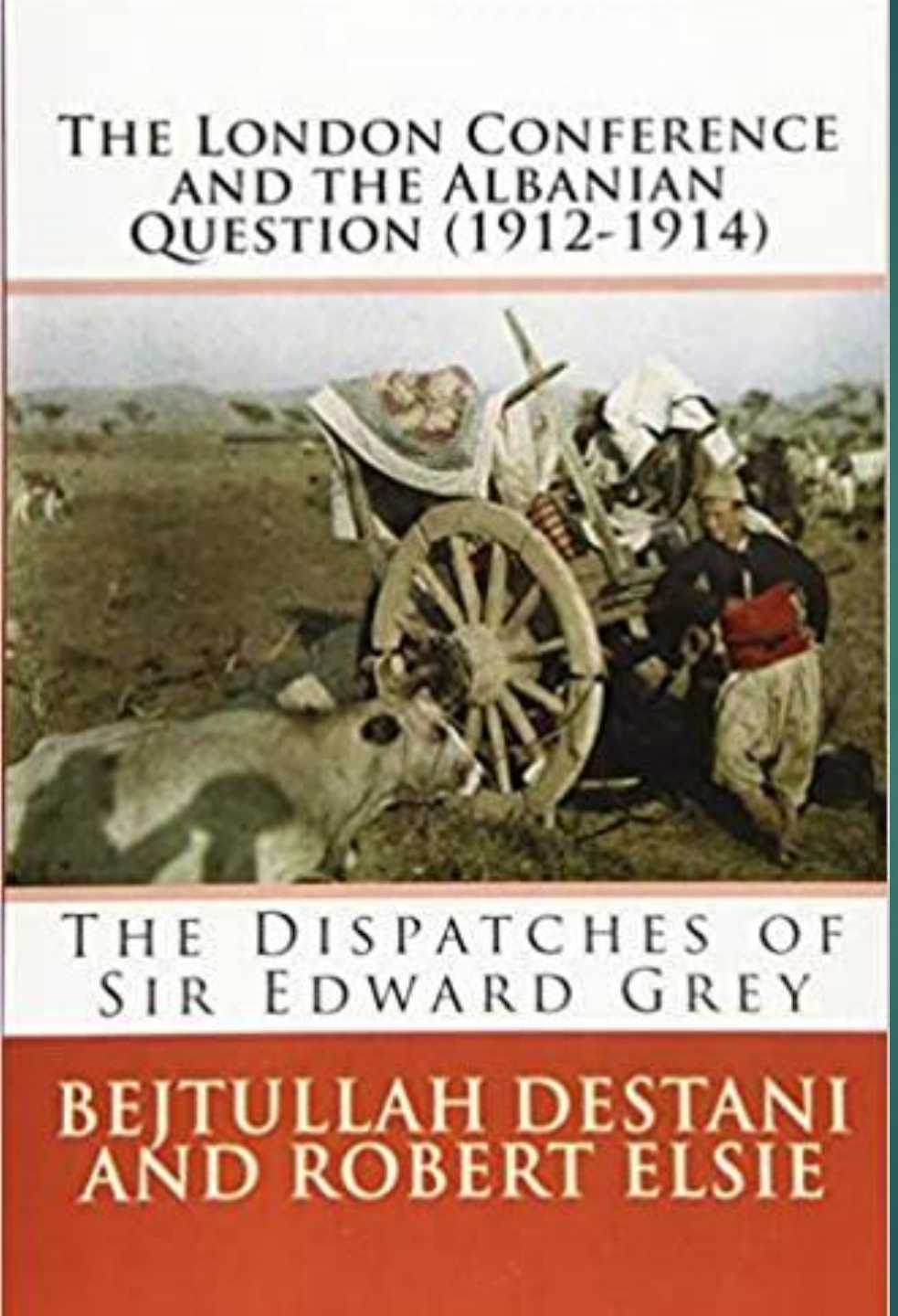
THE MACEDONIAN QUESTION OF THE BRITISH JOURNALISTS 1899 - 1919

- By the end of the nineteenth and certainly by the first decade of the twentieth century, governance in Ottoman Macedonia had broken down almost entirely. Armed bands, many in the guise of nationalist movements, robbed and terrorized the civilian population, and pitted one ethnic or religious group against the other. This volume gathers together editorials and reports by many noted British journalists and writers of the period, figures whose writings kept the British authorities and the British public informed of the chaos that raged in Macedonia from the late nineteenth century to the end of the First World War.



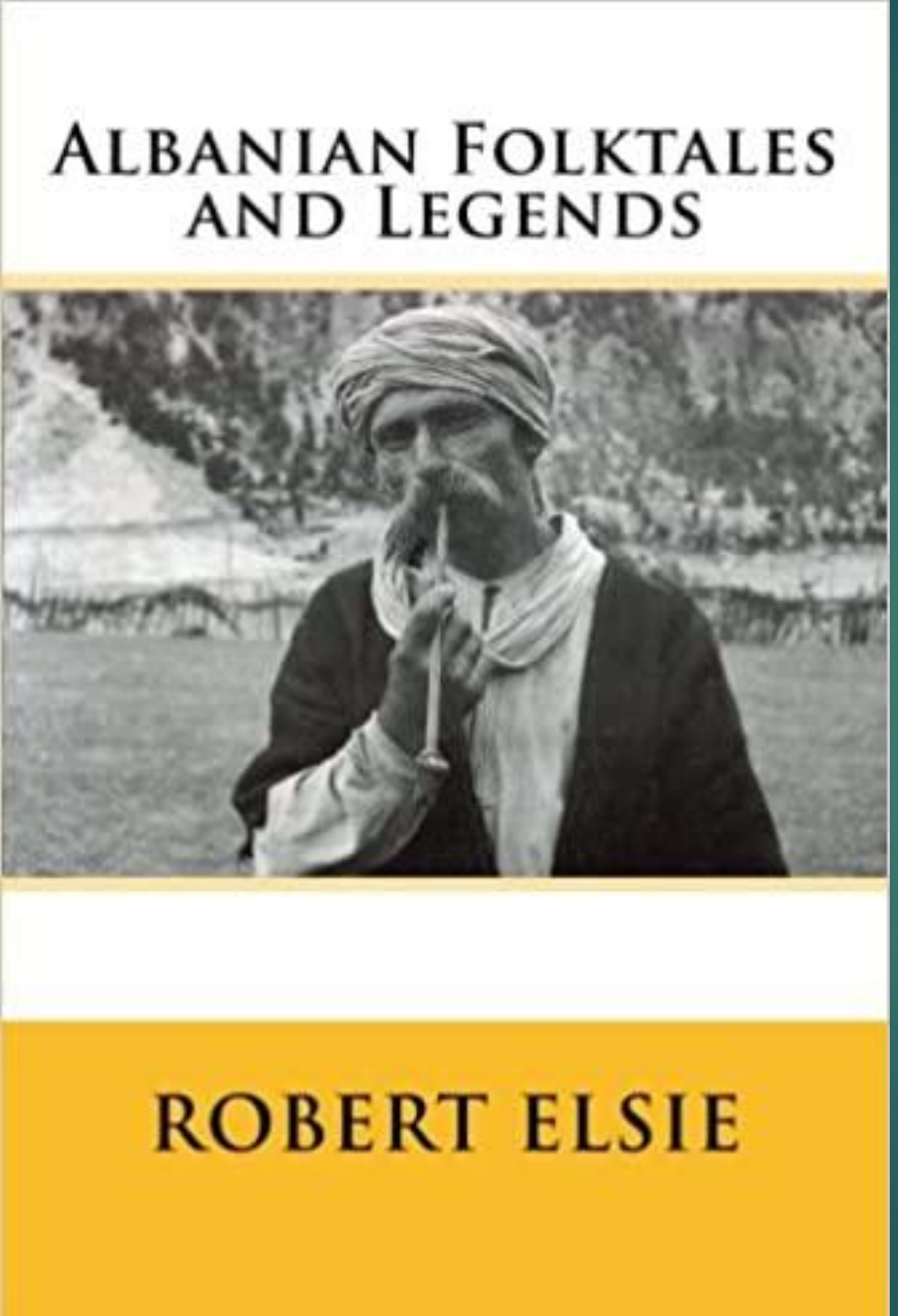
THE TRIBES OF ALBANIA

- Northern Albania and Montenegro are the only regions in Europe to have retained a true tribal society up to the mid-twentieth century. This book provides the first scholarly investigation of this tribal society, a pioneer work that offers a detailed survey of all the major Albanian-speaking tribes in Albania, Montenegro and Kosovo. Robert Elsie provides comprehensive material on the 69 different tribes, including data on their locations, religious affiliations, tribal structures and relations, population statistics, tribal folklore, legends and history. Also included are excerpts from the works of prominent nineteenth and early-twentieth century writers, such as Edith Durham and Johann Georg von Hahn. As the first book of its kind, The Tribes of Albania will be of interest to scholars and students of the Balkans, of southeastern European anthropology, ethnography and history.



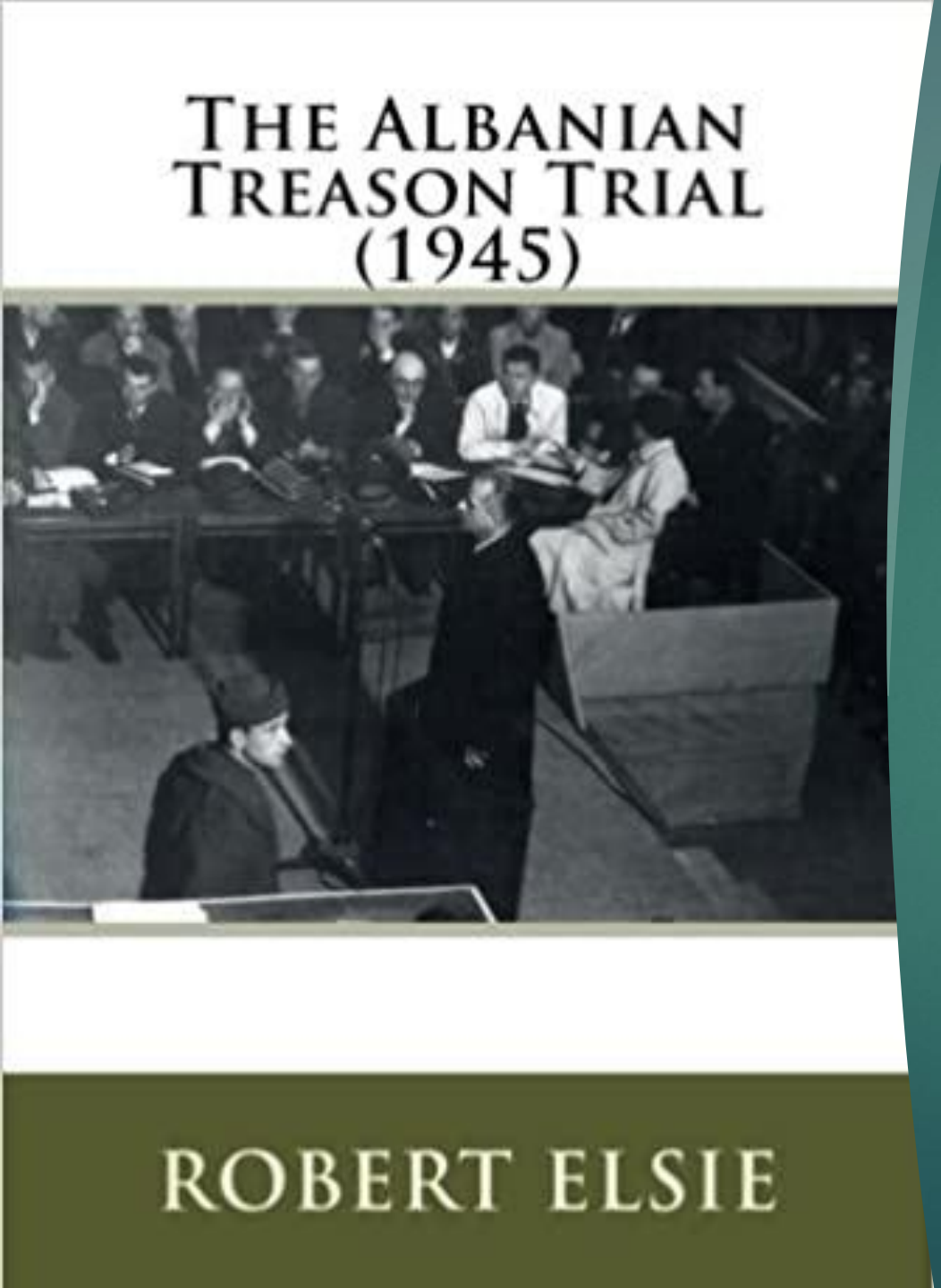
THE LONDON CONFERENCE AND THE ALBANIAN QUESTION (1912 – 1914)

- It was by no means evident in the early years of the twentieth century that Albania in southeastern Europe would become an independent country and would join the family of European nations. After five centuries as a part of the Ottoman Empire, the country was hardly noticed by the other peoples of Europe. This was to change at the time of the Balkans Wars (1912-1913) and the London Conference, at which Albania played a central role and where its fate was decided. The present volume brings together British Foreign Office documents focusing on Albania from 1912 to 1914. Among them are the dispatches and private correspondence of the British Foreign Secretary, Sir Edward Grey.



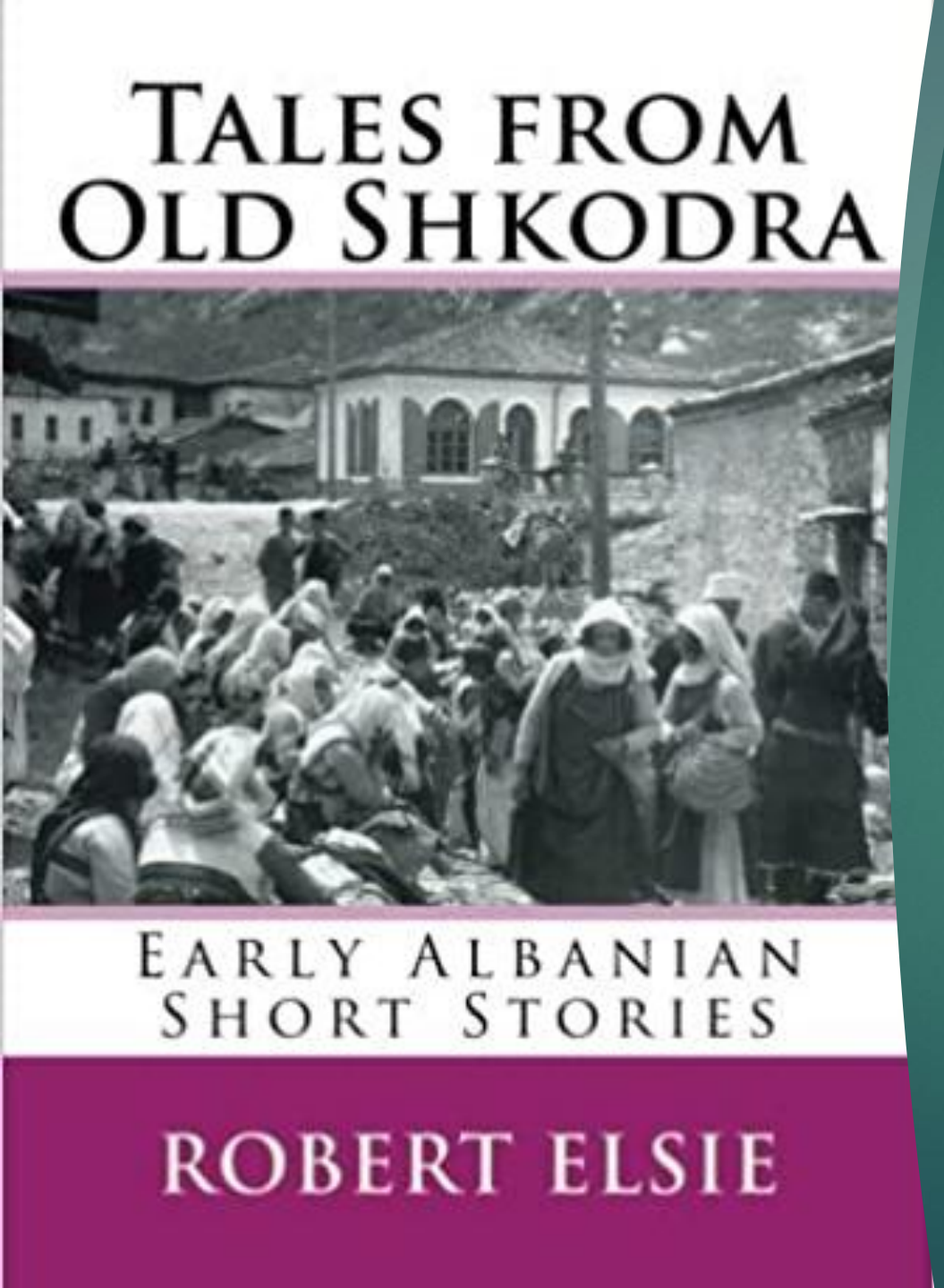
ALBANIAN FOLKTALES AND LEGENDS

- Folktales are still very much alive in the mountains of Albania, a land of haunted history. They are recited in the evenings after a day's work or out in the fields, are learned by heart and pass, as if immortal, from one generation to the next. Whose imagination could not be captured by the cunning of the Scurfhead, by the demands of the Earthly Beauty, by the heroic feats of Muja and Halil or by the appearance of a fiery Kulshedra in the forest? Included in this collection are not only folktales but prose versions of some of the best-known Albanian legends (based on historical or mythological events and figures). The adventures of Muja and Halil and their band of mountain warriors are still told and indeed sung in epic verse in the northern Albanian mountains, and the exploits of the great Scanderbeg, the Albanian national hero who freed large parts of the country from Turkish rule in the fifteenth century, are recounted everywhere Albanians gather, as if events five centuries old had taken place yesterday.



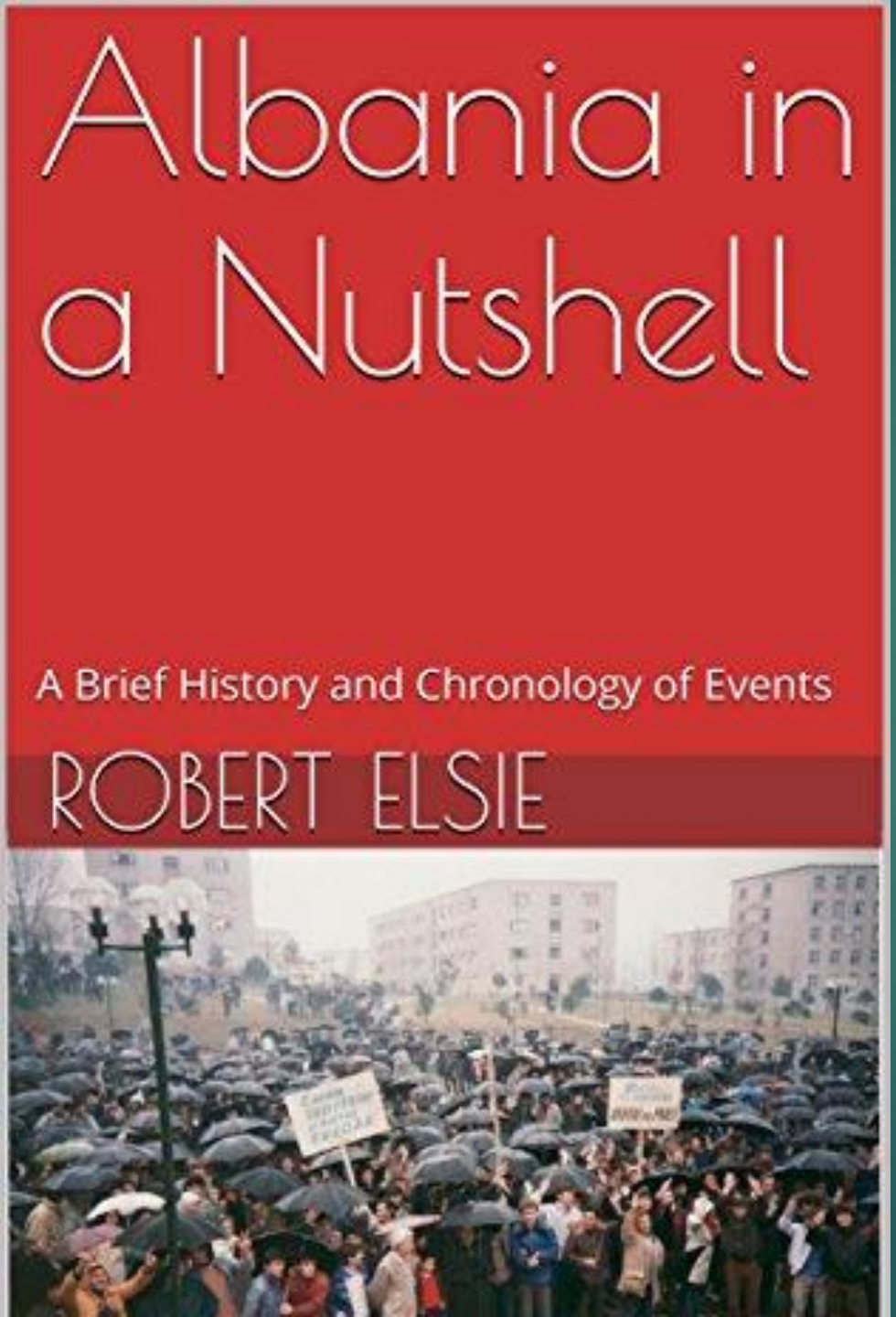
THE ALBANIAN TREASON TRIAL

- In late January 1945, the new communist rulers of Albania began a campaign to prepare and sensitize public opinion in the country for the Special Court for War Criminals and Enemies of the People. The daily newspaper Bashkimi decried the leaders of Balli Kombëtar and Legality as traitors, noting on 2 February: "All without any exception will give accounts before the Albanian people and before Albania. Today or tomorrow the sword of Albanian justice will fall on their necks…" The Special Court, set up on 25 December 1944 by order of the Anti-Fascist National Liberation Council, opened its doors at the Kosovo Cinema, the building later to house the National Theatre, on 1 March 1945. On trial were sixty men.



TALES FROM SHKODRA

In the 1920s and 1930s, the writers of Shkodra in northern Albania were profoundly aware of the misery around them, and it is perhaps the extreme diversity of their social environment which furthered their talents. They looked to the West and longed for a new, European Albania, yet they found themselves in an archaic society, one so bound by the force of tradition and custom that progress was impossible. Their writings reflected and gave full expression to this dilemma. The present collection brings together a number of well-known short stories and prose sketches by two of the finest Albanian writers of the first half of the twentieth century: Ernest Koliqi and Migjeni. These two men of Shkodra, one raised as a Catholic and the other as Orthodox, could scarcely have been more different.



ALBANIA IN A NUTSHELL

- This book provides a short overview of the history of Albania for the general reader.

- Albania is a small country in southeastern Europe. It is situated on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea in the southwestern part of the Balkan Peninsula and borders on Montenegro to the north, Kosovo to the northeast, the Republic of Macedonia to the east, and Greece to the south.
But a few decades ago, Albania was something of a curiosity on Planet Earth. Perhaps only North Korea was as isolated from the rest of the world as Albania was. For left-wing idealists, it was a distant Shangri-la where all social inequalities had been done away with; for those few individuals with concrete knowledge of the realities of the Stalinist regime that held power until 1990, and for the vast majority of people living in Albania, it was hell on earth.

- Despite its somber past, Albania is, in essence, a European nation like any other and will soon, it is to be hoped, advance and take its proper place in Europe and the world.

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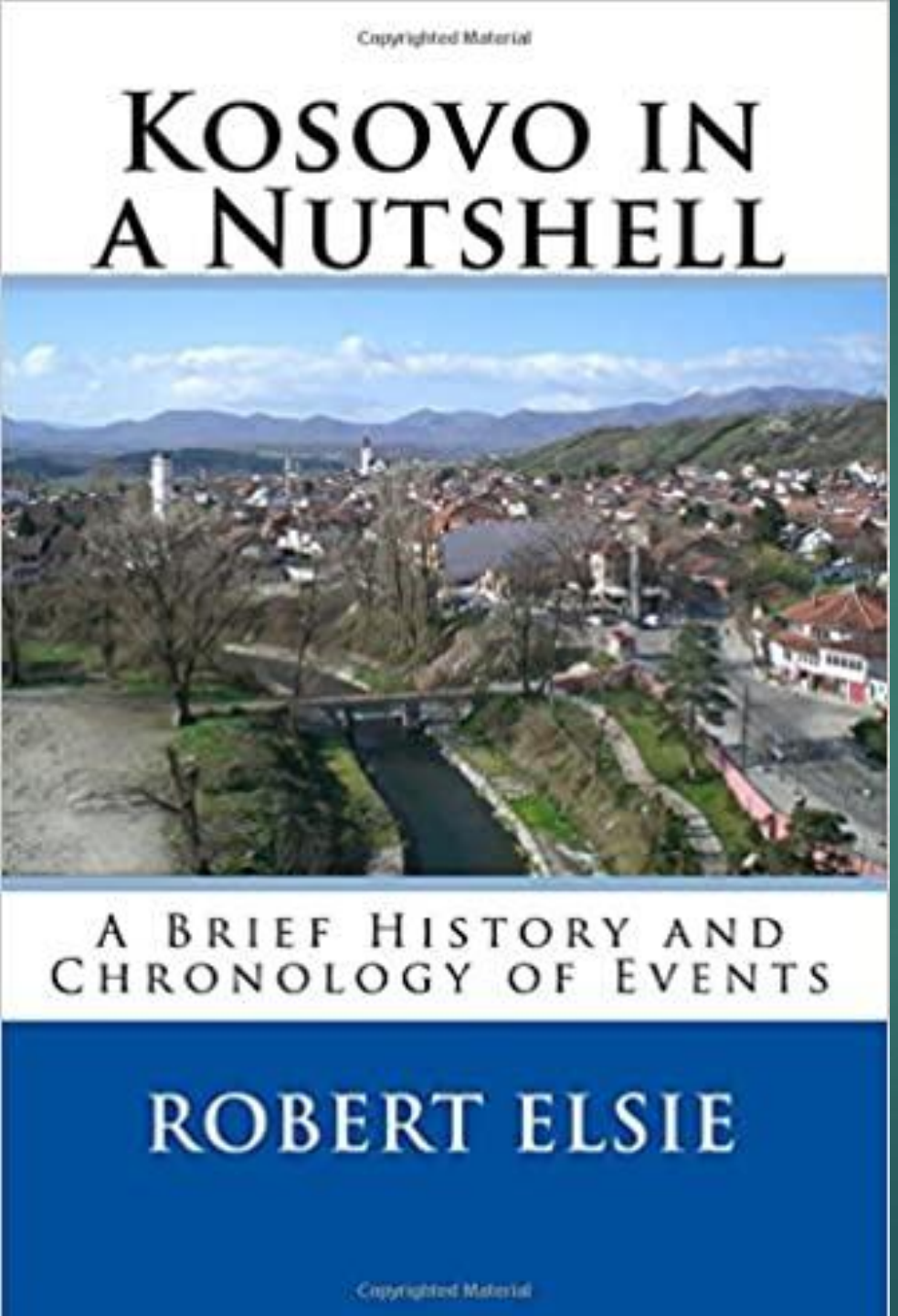
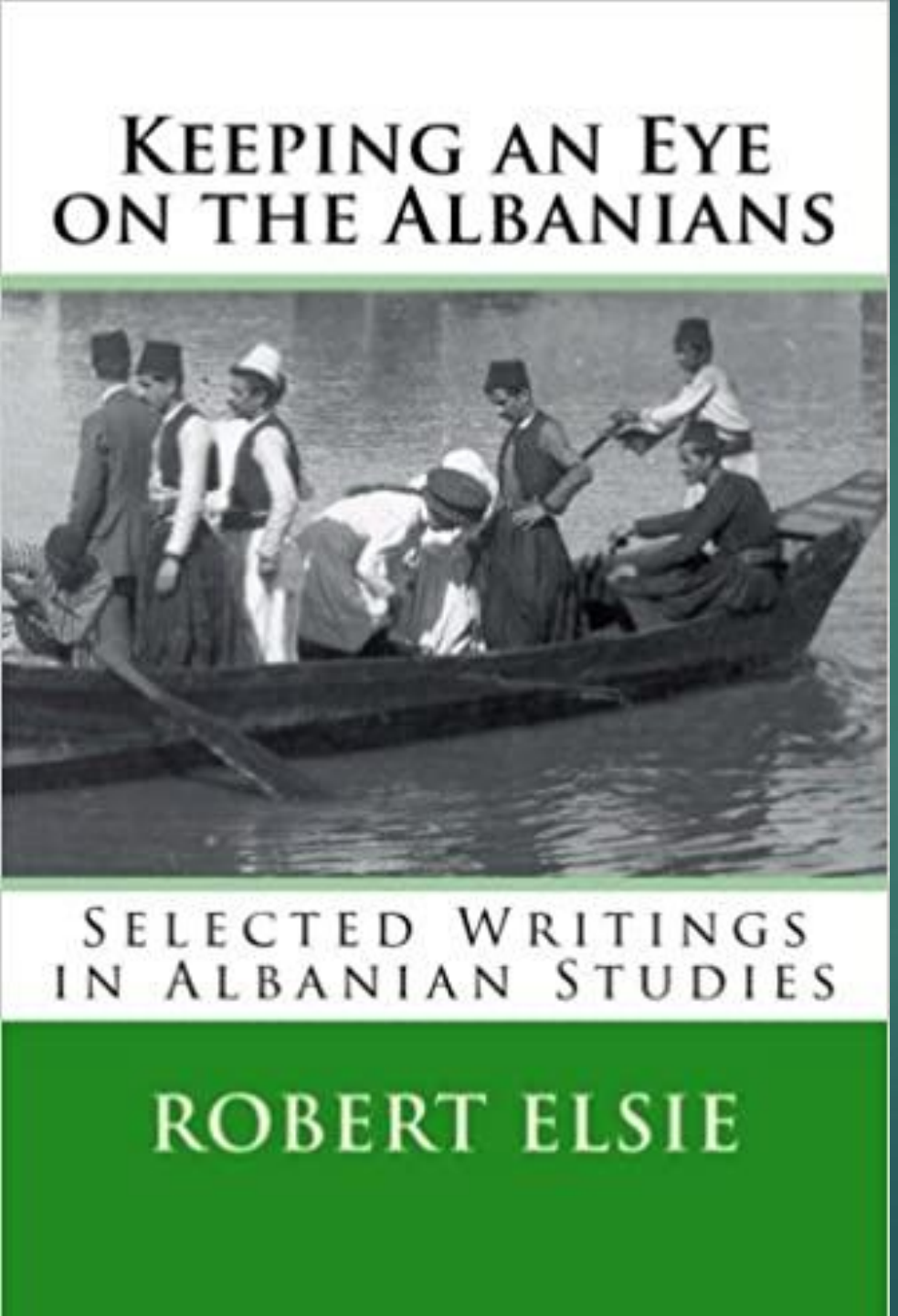


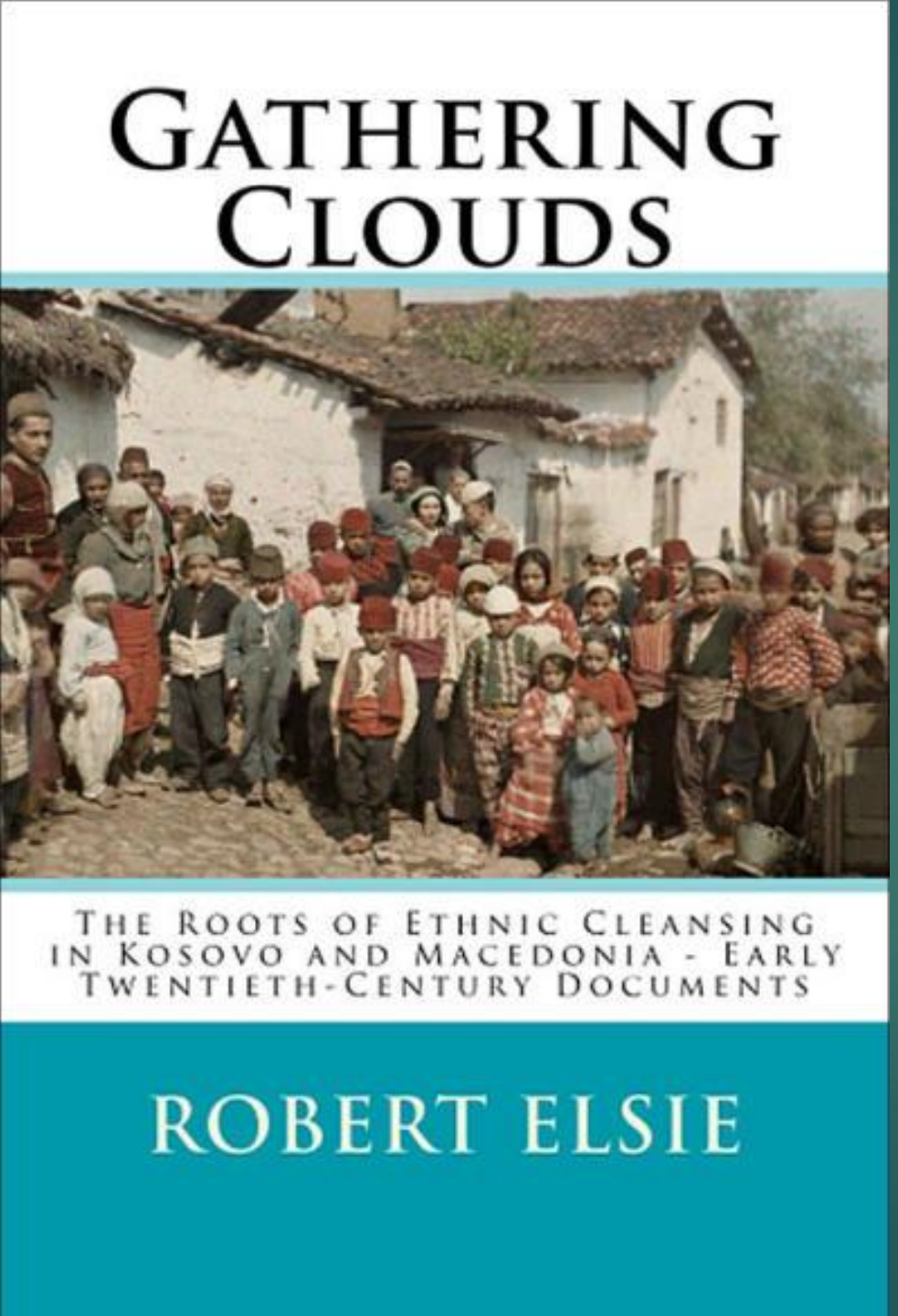
KOSOVO IN A NUTSHELL

- Kosovo is the newest country in Europe. It is the seventh and probably last state to arise from the ruins of former Yugoslavia. It is also one of the poorest countries in Europe. Kosovo's long struggle for identity, self-determination and independence has been bitter, and it will be in need of international assistance for a while before it can become a normal European nation like the others. This book provides a short overview of the history of Kosovo for the general reader.



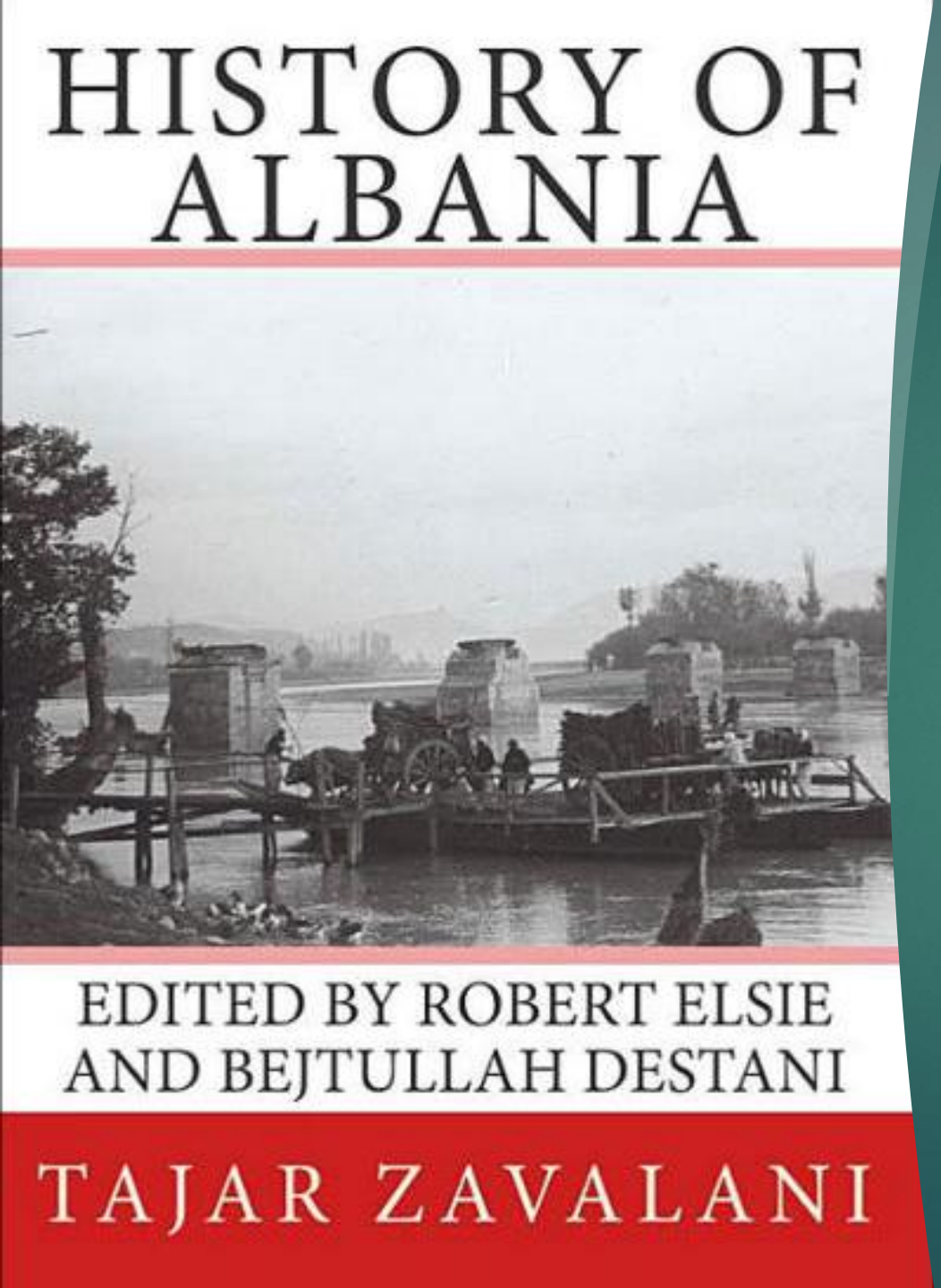
KEEPING AN EYE ON THE ALBANIANS

- Keeping an eye on the Albanians is a compilation of his major articles and essays on Albanian culture (history, literature, philology, religion, etc.), a reflection of his constant endeavor to make the tiny Albanian nation better known in the world.



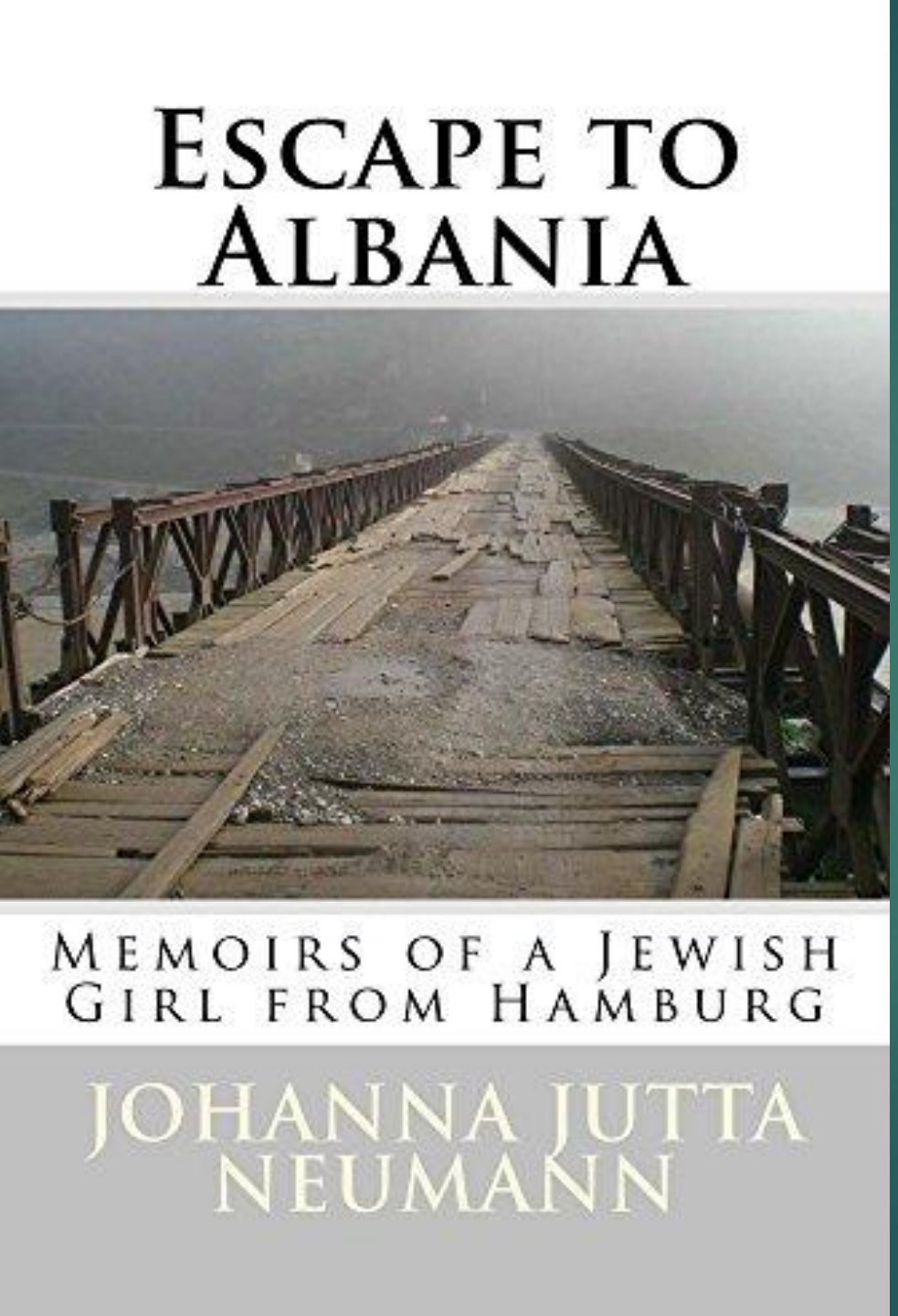
GATHERING CLOUDS

- The present volume endeavors to throw some light on the historical dimension of ethnic cleansing in Kosovo. It consists of a collection of texts, written from 1912 to 1944, which make it evident that ethnic cleansing in Kosovo and Macedonia was a cornerstone of Serbian Government policies from the moment Serbian forces seized Kosovo and much of Macedonia from the Ottoman Empire in 1912-1913.It is to be hoped that these documents will provide insight into the historical background behind the tragic events that took place in Yugoslavia, and in particular in Kosovo, at the end of the twentieth century.



THE HISTORY OF ALBANIA BY TAJAR ZAVALANI

- The History of Albania by Tajar Zavalani (1903-1966) is the first full-length history of Albania to have been written in English. It covers the period from ancient times to the mid-twentieth century and provides the reader with a good overview of the historical development of a Balkan nation, which has to a large extent been ignored, even by scholars and specialists in Southeast European history. Retrieved after fifty years of oblivion, the fruits of Zavalani's imposing project are now available to the reading public for the first time. Tajar Zavalani was born in Korça (Albania) and fled to Italy with the rise of the dictatorship of Ahmet Zogu. There, Soviet agents recruited him and offered to let him study in Russia as a "victim of counter-revolution." In November 1930, after several years of study in Moscow and Leningrad, he left Russia, about which he now had serious misgivings. After the Italian invasion of Albania in 1939, Zavalani was interned in northern Italy, from where he escaped with his wife, Selma Zavalani (1915-1995), former lady-in-waiting to Queen Geraldine, via Switzerland to France and then in 1940, with King Zog's party, on into exile in England. In November 1940, Zavalani was given a job in the BBC's new Albanian-language service, which he came to head and where he worked until his death in an accident on 19 August 1966. He was a well-known and active figure of the Albanian exile community in Britain. The present History of Albania was composed for the most part between 1961 and 1963



ESCAPE TO ALBANIA

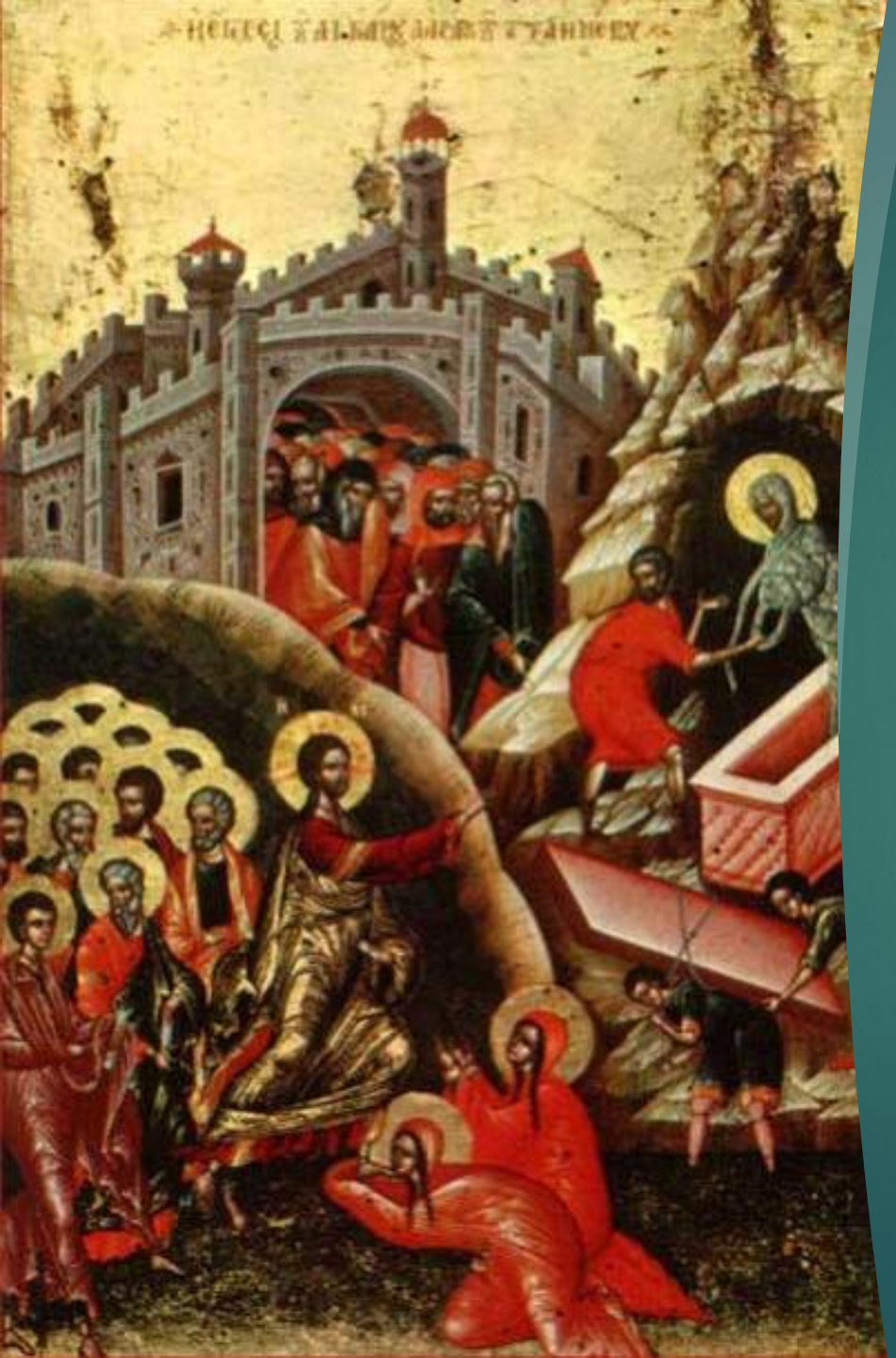
- Johanna Jutta Neumann, née Gerechter, was born in 1930 of a Jewish family in Hamburg. With the rise of the Nazis, she fled with her parents to Albania where she spent the Second World War. Her memoirs narrate the story of her childhood, of her years in Albania under Italian and German occupation, and of her family's survival.

DR ROBERT ELSIE

EARLY RECORDS OF THE ALBANIAN HISTORY

1000 — 1018
ANONYMOUS: FRAGMENT ON THE ORIGINS OF NATIONS

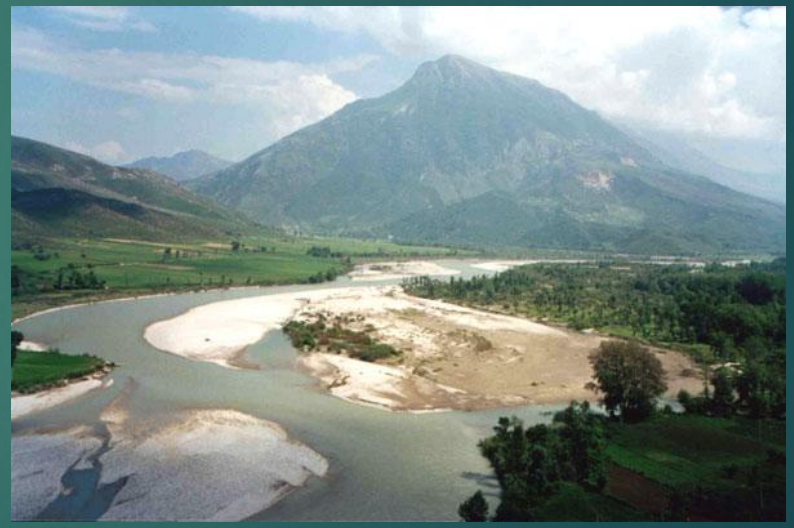
- Byzantine historian Michael Attaliates gives the earliest references to the Albanian people as recorded in Byzantine historical texts.



YEARS - 1038, 1042, 1078 Michael Attaleiates: The First Byzantine References

YEAR 1154
MUHAMMAD AL-IDRISI: THE BOOK OF ROGER

Muhammed al-Idrisi was a celebrated Arab geographer. He was born in Ceuta in North Africa and is said to have studied in Cordoba, travelling widely throughout Andalusia and North Africa. For reasons which are unclear, he settled at the court of King Roger II of Sicily (r. 1105-1154), for whom he compiled a geography of the known world. This work, known as the 'Book of Roger', is divided into seven climate zones. It was completed in 1154 and provides some useful information on Albania and Macedonia.



YEAR 1257
GEORGE ACROPOLITES: AN ALBANIAN UPRISING

Historian George Acropolites (1217-1282) was the tutor of Emperor Theodore II Lascaris (r. 1254-1258) and later became rector of the university in Constantinople. His 'Chronicle' of the Nicaean Empire, based to a good degree on first-hand information and personal observations, covers the years 1203-1261.

I set off for Albania. Passing through Serbia, Kastoria and the Achrida (Ohrid) region, I arrived in Albania, reached Dyrrachion (Durrës) with the notables of that region. There I remained for eight days and then I left Durrës and, passing through Chounavia, crossed the mountain range known as 'Kake Petra' to reach Mate (Mat) and from there, Debre (Dibra) and then Prilep via Kytzabis.

YEAR 1267
GEORGE PACHYMERES: AN EARTHQUAKE IN DURRËS

- A Byzantine historian describes the earthquake that destroyed Durrës in July 1267.

YEAR 1308
ANONYMOUS: DESCRIPTION OF EASTERN EUROPE

- Kamara Bridge over the Shkumbin River
at Miraka, near Elbasan
(Photo: Robert Elsie).

YEAR 1322
SIMON FITZSIMONS: ITINERARY FROM IRELAND TO THE HOLY LAND

Narratives of pilgrims on their way to the Holy Land provide a primary source of information for much of the eastern Mediterranean in the first half of the second millennium, and in one such narrative dating from the year 1322, we find a passage about Albania. Although many pilgrims showed no more than a passing interest in the lands they visited *en route* to their goal, two Anglo-Irish pilgrims of the Franciscan Order, Symon Semeonis and Hugo Illuminator, whom we may refer to in English as Simon Fitzsimons and Hugh the Illuminator, were impressed by their short stopover in the first half of the fourteenth century.

View of Durrës, ca. 1930.

YEARS 1328, 1332, 1336
JOHN CANTACUZENE: UNRULY NOMADS PAY HOMAGE TO THE EMPEROR

Typical of the many short references to the Albanians in Byzantine chronicles is the following text by the Emperor John VI Cantacuzene (year. 1347-1355), whose 'History' covers the years 1320-1356. Here as in other texts, the Albanian tribes are described as wild and unruly nomads living in mountainous regions in the summer months and migrating to the lowlands in the winter months.

Mountain fortress of Kanina near Vlora (Photo: Robert Elsie).

1470
FIOR JONIMA: A RAVAGED LAND

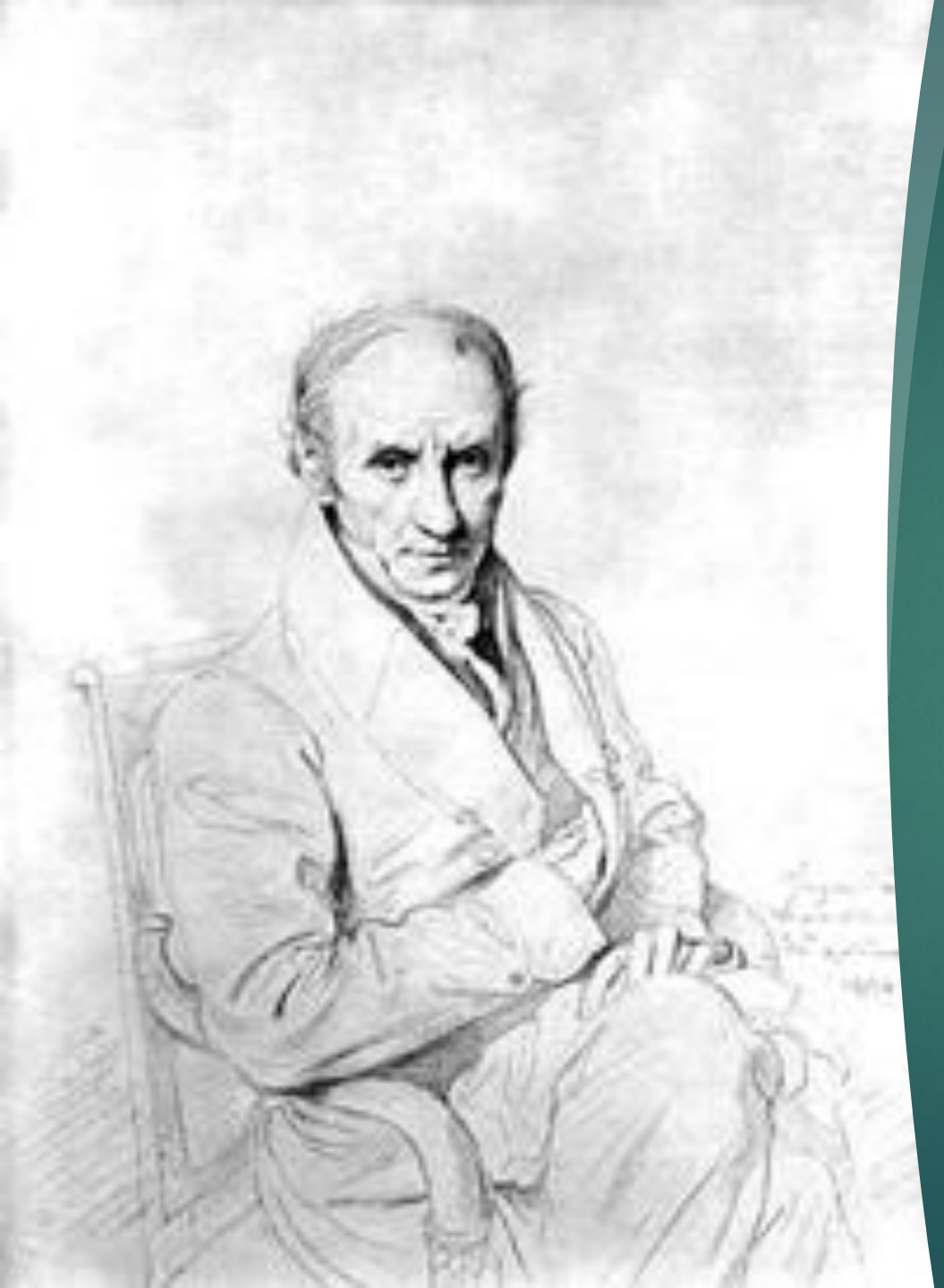
The Ottoman military campaigns of 1466 and 1467 ravaged most of the country. It was the sultan's policy to empty the land of its native inhabitants, should they put up resistance. Fior Jonima of Shkodra, scion of the noble Albanian Jonima family that owned much land between the Mat and Ishëm rivers, wrote this response to the Venetian tax authorities who had inquired of him as to why so little revenue had been arriving from Albania. The short chronology of cataclysms that Jonima provides here shows that much of Albania was a wasteland at the time. It is the earliest personal account given by an Albanian about the state of his country.

The Fortress of Shkodra (Photo: Marubbi 1925).

1474
GEORGE MERULA: THE SIEGE OF SHKODRA

The Fortress of Shkodra, ca. 1903 (Photo: Franz Baron Nopcsa).

Shkodra, situated on the border with Dalmatia and Macedonia, is a well-fortified city, virtually on all four sites, both from its natural position and because of its constructed fortifications. Around the fortress are high cliffs and from up top, one can observe all the plains below. On one side there is a more gradual slope which leads one up to the fortress. The waters of the Buna River flow by, right past the bottom of the hill. Along this river, the waters of a lake, of recent formation, flow into the sea. The river is slightly larger than our Tanaro



1806
François Pouqueville: Travels in Epirus and Albania

French historian and diplomat François Charles Hugues Laurent Pouqueville (1770-1838), studied medicine at the Sorbonne in Paris under Antoine Dubois.

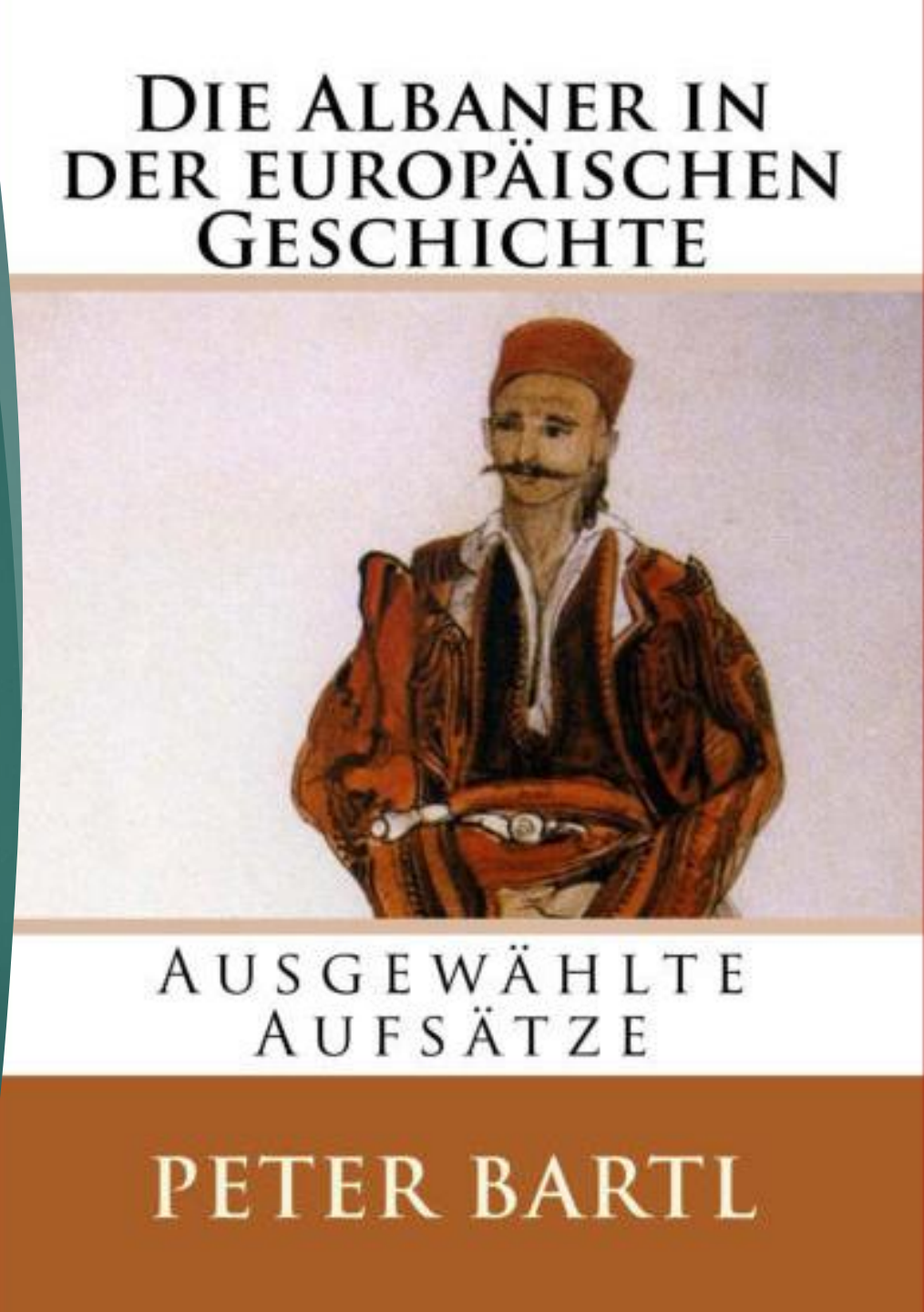
As a physician, he took part in the French expedition to Egypt.

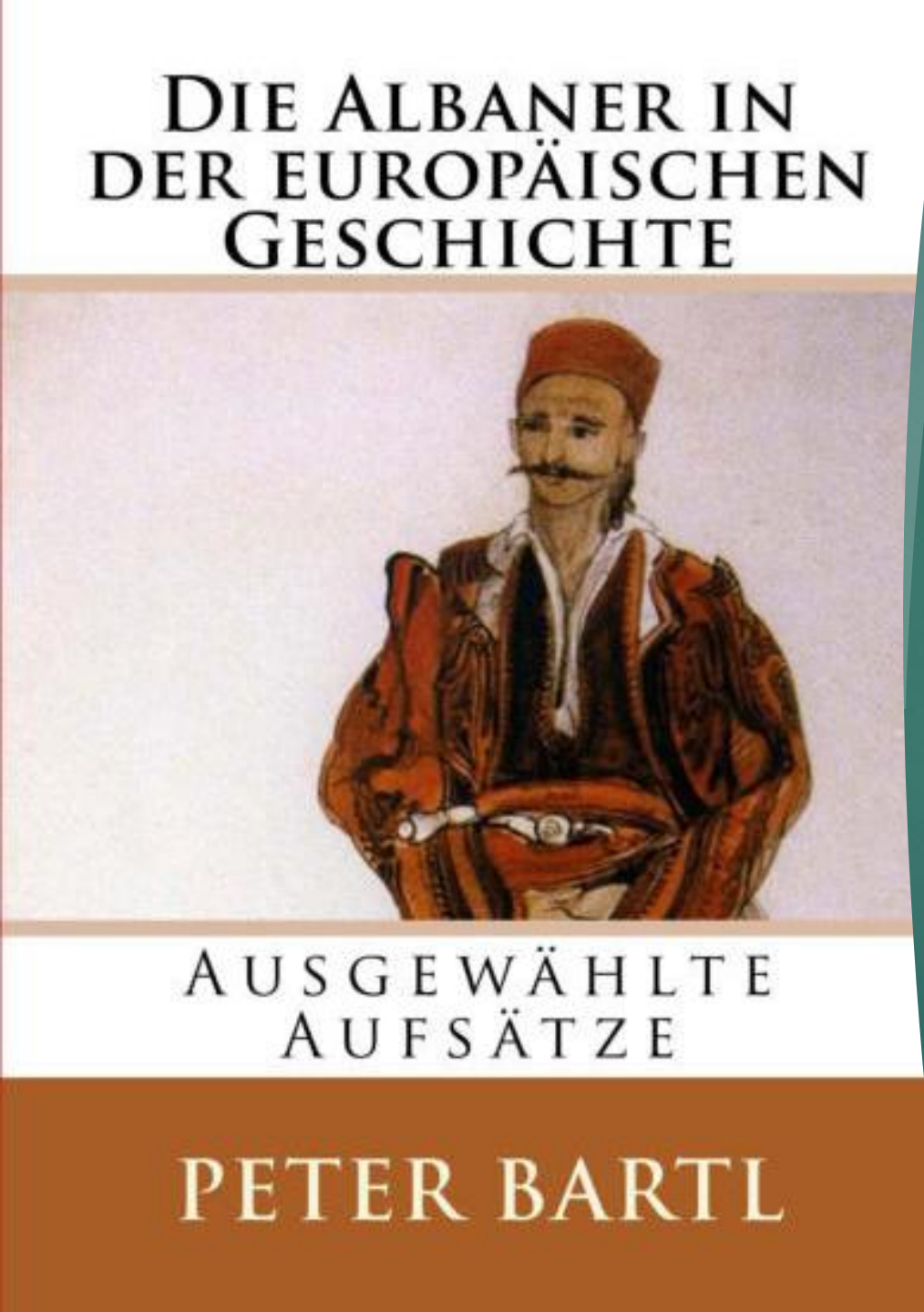
On 25 November 1798, on his way back to France, he was captured by pirates and sent to Navarino in the Peloponnese, where he was imprisoned and held for ransom by the Turks.

He spent two years in prison in Istanbul and returned to France in 1801. It was in prison that he **began writing his first travel memoirs.**

Peter Bartl
Die Albaner in der europäischen Geschichte: Ausgewählte Aufsätze

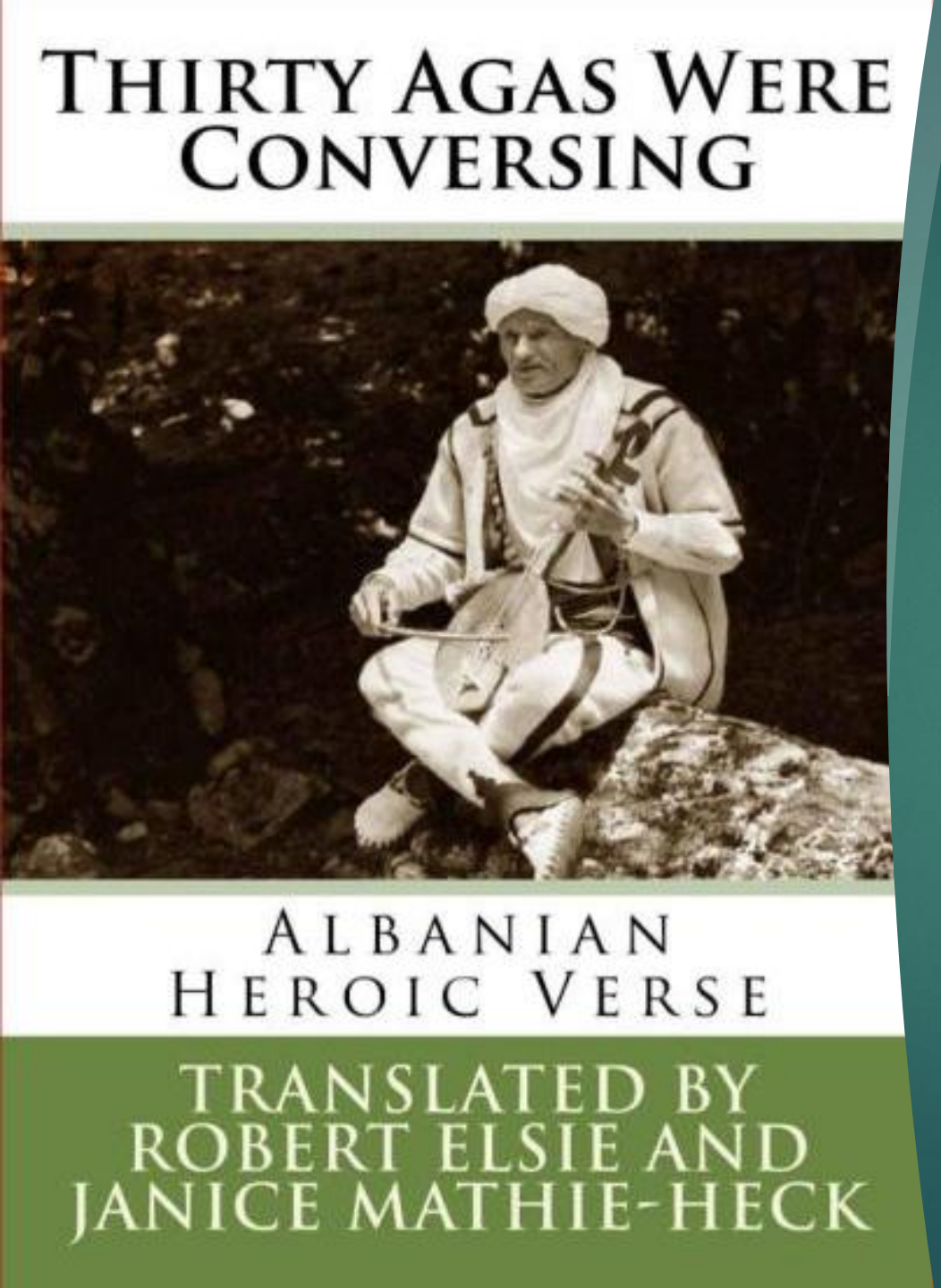
- Peter Bartl (Cottbus 1938-) i kushtoi jetën e tij jashtëzakonisht të pasur dhe të rëndësishme kërkimore shqiptarëve në historinë evropiane dhe në të njëjtën kohë hap rrugë të reja dhe të sigurta për kërkime historike, veçanërisht në hapësirën e tyre të jetesës, në një kohë trazirash shoqërore dhe shkencore-politike. Nëse na duket si kulmi i hulumtimit të historisë albanologjike dhe historisë fetare, kjo bazohet kryesisht në monografitë e tij gjerësisht të njohura dhe punën e tij shembullore të redaktimit në materiale arkivore shumë të gjera. Roli i tij qendror në kërkimet historike shqiptare mbështetet gjithashtu nga kontributet e tij të shumta: për pjesën më të madhe të studimeve mbi problemet individuale në historinë shqiptare dhe historinë e fesë në vendet shqipfolëse, si dhe në diasporën në Italinë e Jugut dhe Greqinë.





Peter Bartl Albanians in the European History

- Peter Bartl (Cottbus 1938-) dedicated his extraordinarily rich and important research life to the Albanians in European history and at the same time paves new and safe paths for historical research, especially in their living space, in a time of social and scientific-political upheaval. If it appears to us as the climax of Albanological history and religious history research, this is primarily based on his widely known monographs and his exemplary editing work on very extensive archive materials. However, his central role in Albanian historical research is also underpinned by his numerous contributions: for the most part studies on individual problems in Albanian history and the history of religion both in Albanian-speaking countries and in the diaspora in southern Italy and Greece.

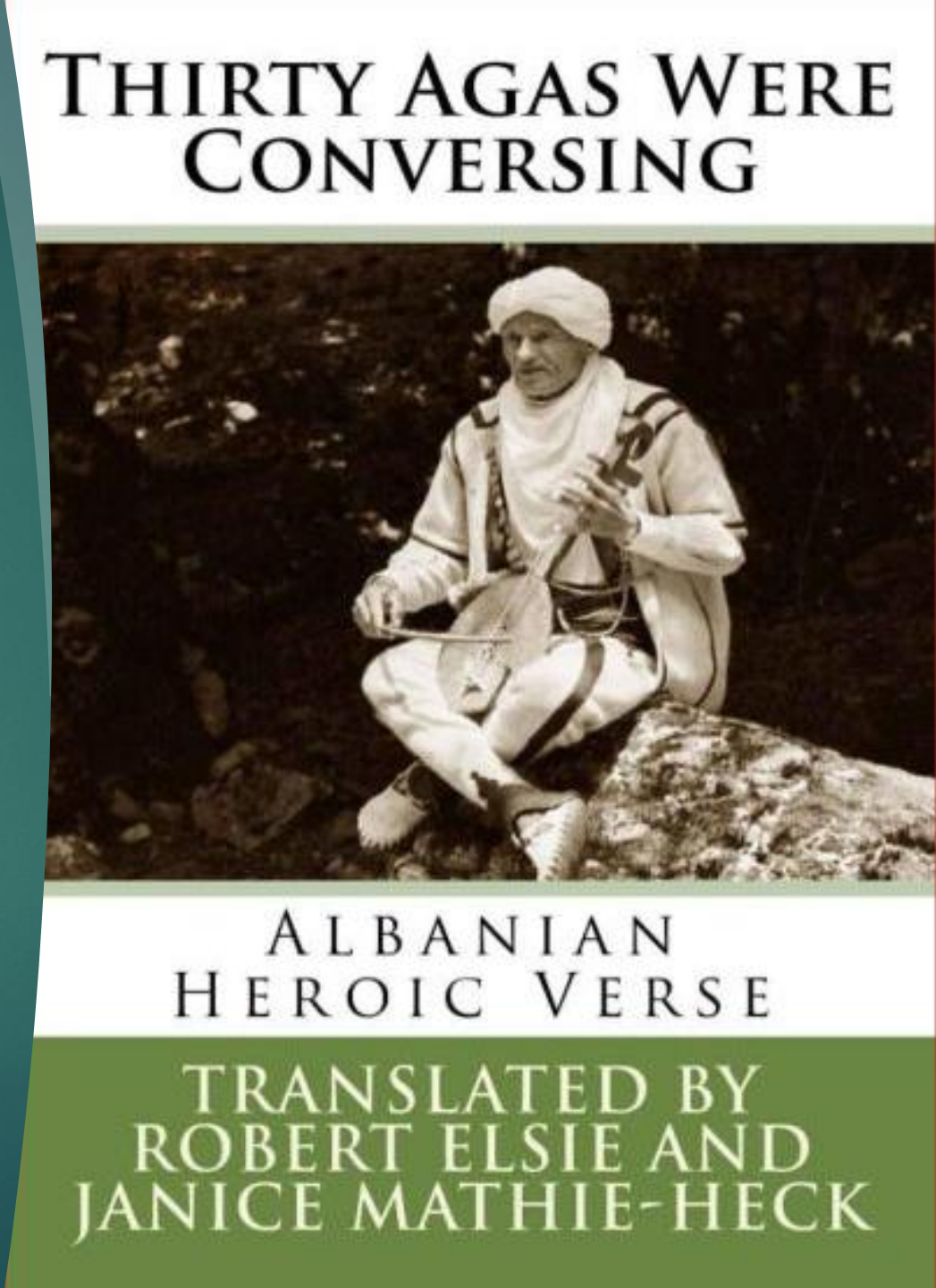


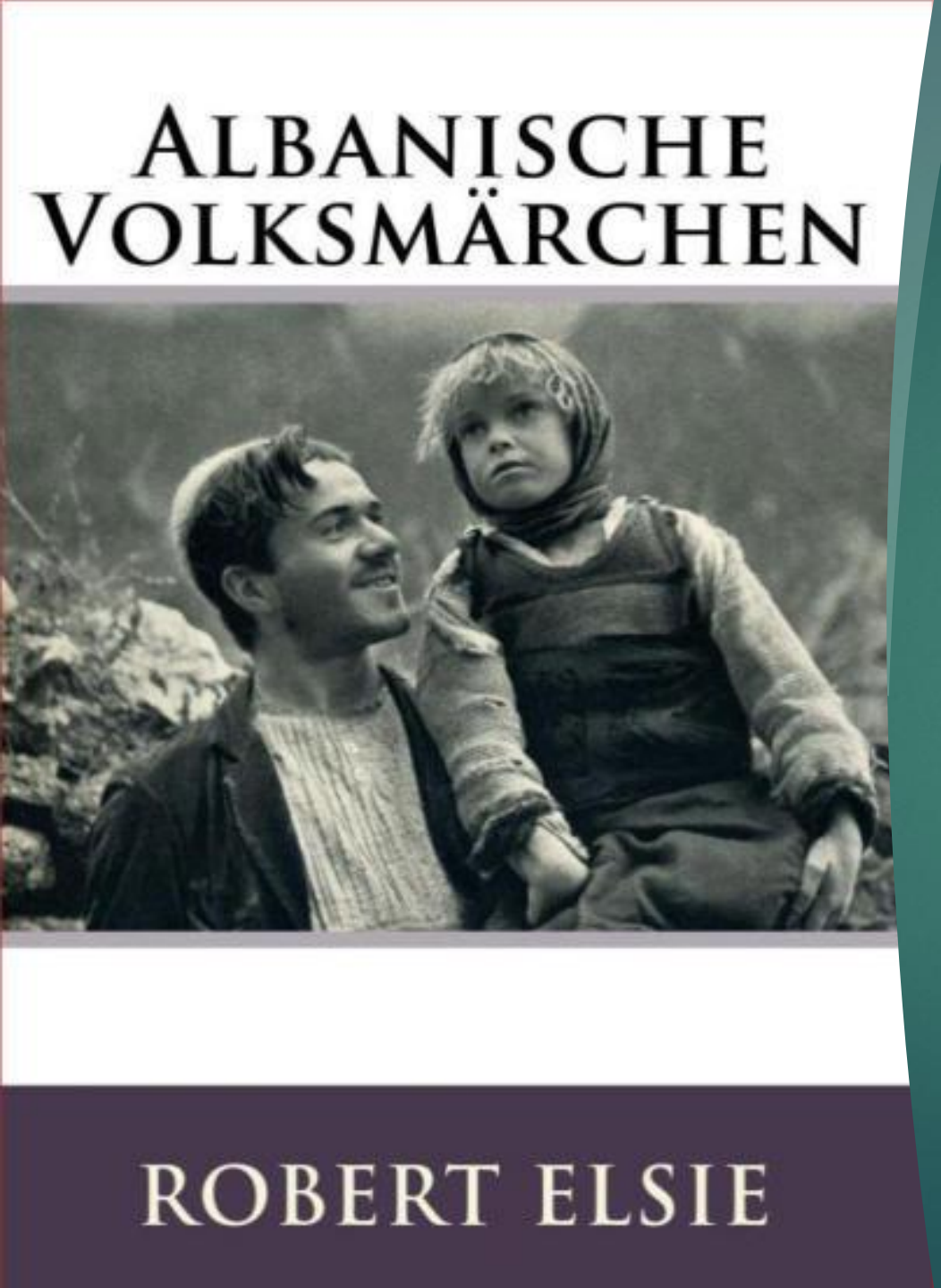
Thirty Agas were Conversing

- To many people's surprise, the Albanian epic is still alive and kicking. Even in the second decade of the twenty-first century, one can still find a good number of singers, called lahutars in Albanian, who are able to sing and recite the heroic deeds of Muja and Halili and their thirty Agas. These are men, and now a good number of women, who have inherited their repertoires as part of an unbroken oral tradition passed down from generation to generation. One can safely assume that they are the very last native singers of oral epic verse in Europe!In 2011, a major project was initiated to record and document the Albanian epic in the five Balkan countries in which it is still sung: Albania, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia. The wealth of material collected from 2012-2014 shows that the Albanian epic, although perhaps not what it was in former years, IS by no means moribund. About 4,000 lines of verse were translated into English for this volume.

Tridhjete agallare ne bisede

- Për habinë e shumë njerëzve, epika shqiptare është ende gjallë dhe vazhdon tw kwndohet. Edhe në dekadën e dytë të shekullit njëzet e një, ende mund të gjesh një numër të mirë këngëtarësh, të quajtur lahutarë në shqip, të cilët janë në gjendje të këndojnë dhe të recitojnë veprat heroike të Mujës dhe Halilit dhe tridhjetë Agave të tyre. Këta janë burra, dhe tani një numër i mirë i grave, të cilat kanë trashëguar repertorët e tyre si pjesë e një tradite gojore të pandërprerë, e transmetuar nga brezi në brez. Dikush mund të supozojë me siguri se ata janë këngëtarët më të fundit vendas të vargjeve epike gojore në Evropë! Në vitin 2011, një projekt i madh u iniciua për të regjistruar dhe dokumentuar epikën shqiptare në pesë vendet e Ballkanit në të cilat ajo ende këndohet: Shqipëria, Kosova, Maqedonia, Mali i Zi dhe Serbia. Pasuria e materialit të mbledhur nga 2012-2014 tregon se epika shqiptare, megjithëse ndoshta jo ajo që ishte në vitet e mëparshme, nuk është aspak e varfër. Rreth 4,000 rreshta vargje u përkthyen në anglisht për këtë vëllim.





Albanian fairy tales

- Preface

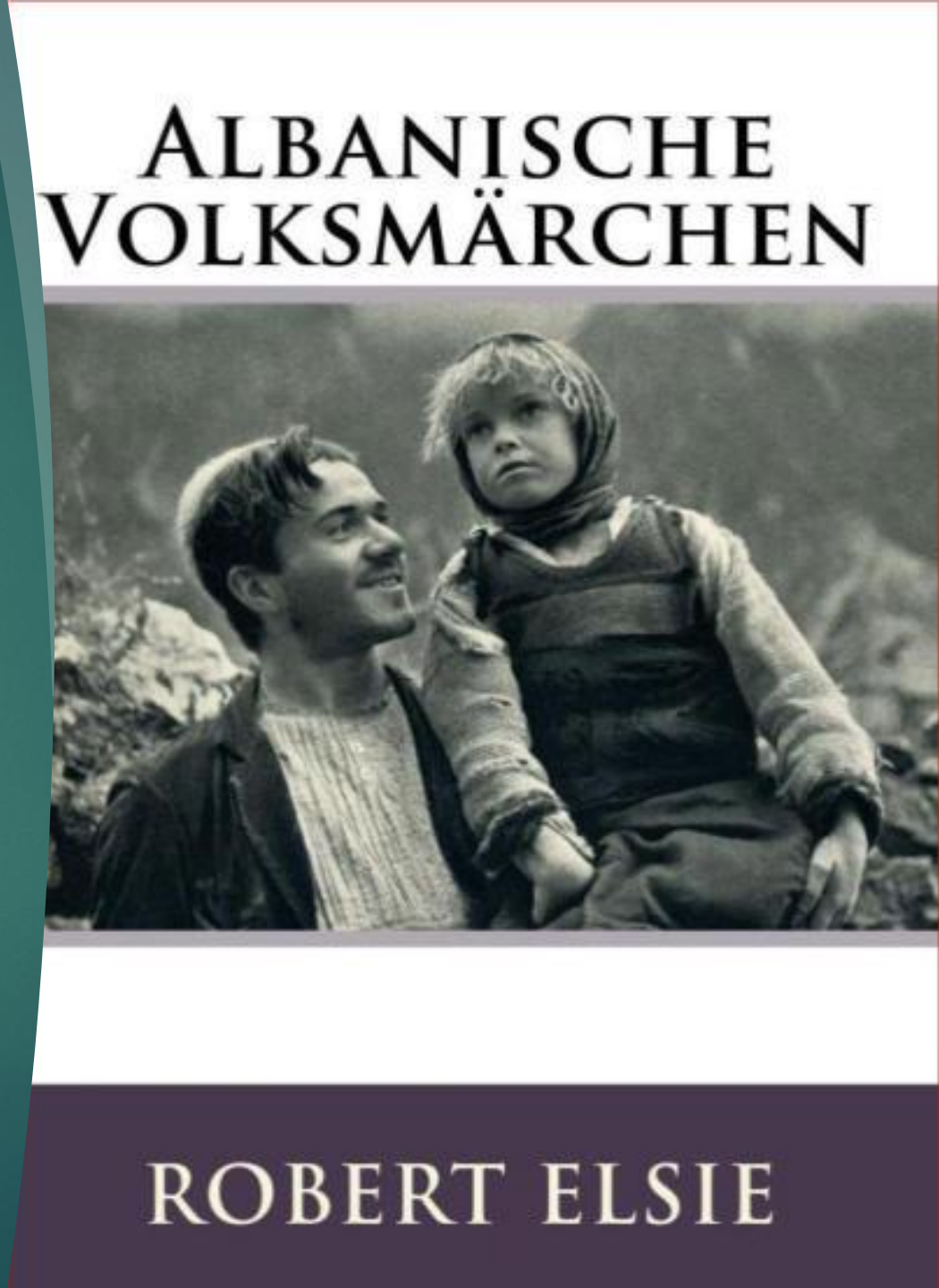
- The present collection of Albanian folk tales, with over a hundred fairy tales, represents the largest compilation of Albanian stories in German to date. It is based on early collections and anthologies of German-speaking scholars, many of them linguists, who needed and recorded unadulterated written material for their research into the Albanian language

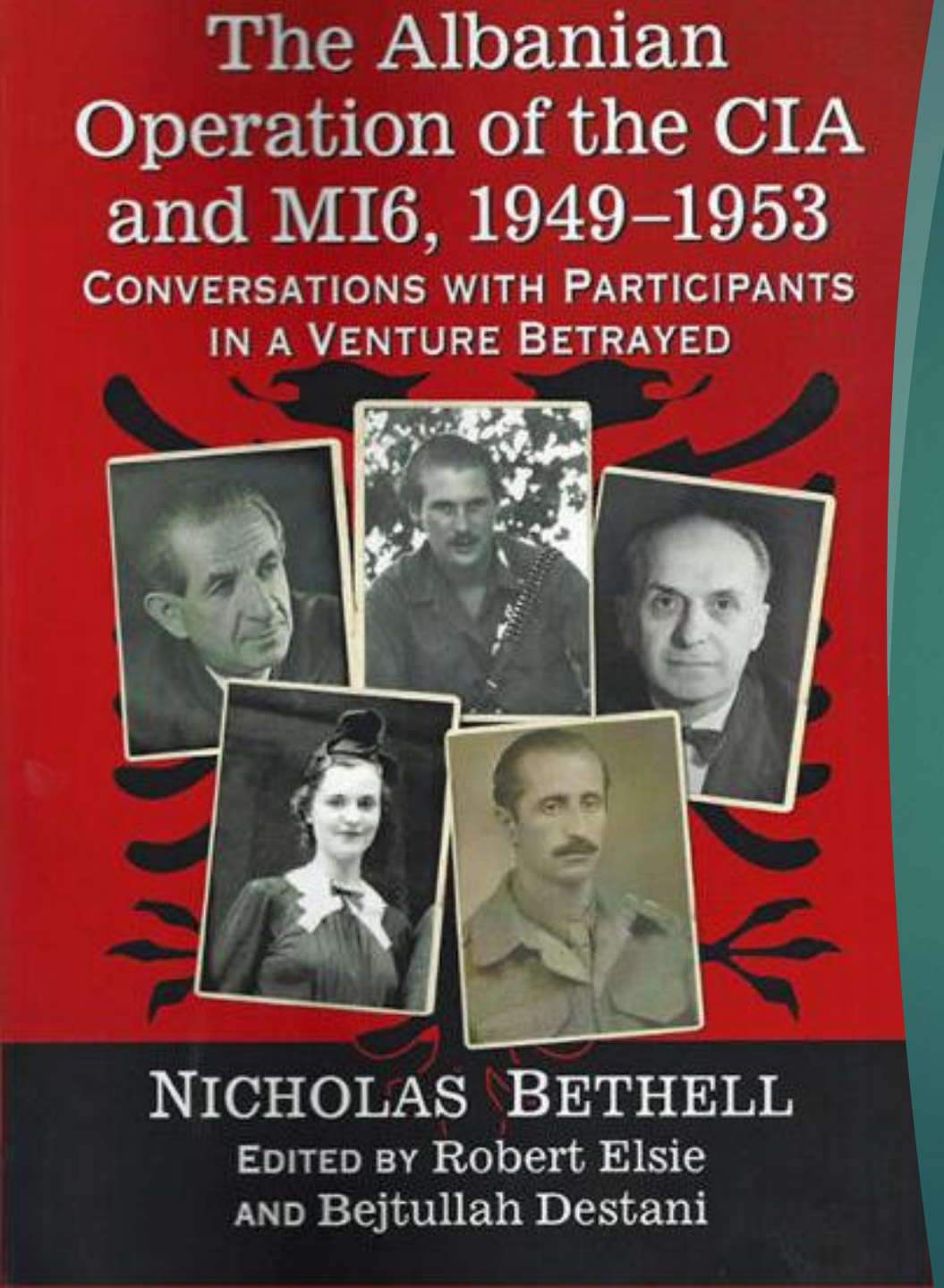
- This also includes the earliest foreign language translations of Albanian fairy tales.

- As early as 1848, the Austrian Vice Consul in Janina, Johann Georg von Hahn (1811-1869), who was born in Frankfurt am Main, collected fairy tales from the Gjirokastra area. Around 1862 he recorded further fairy tales on the then Albanian-speaking island of Poros, southwest of Athens. On August 2, 1863, shortly before his great trip to Albania, von Hahn wrote to the Scottish historian and philhellenic George Finlay (1799-1875), who was staying in Plaka, the Albanian quarter of Athens: "I have not heard of my fairy tale collection for a long time, but I suspect that their printing, if not completed, must be near its end. So I hope to be able to send it to you when I return at the latest, if I have decided to do so. "Soon afterwards, the first Albanian fairy tales appeared in German in his two-volume work, Greek and Albanian Fairy Tales (Leipzig 1864)

Perralla shqiptare

- Parathënie
- Koleksioni i tanishëm i përrallave popullore shqiptare, me mbi njëqind përralla, përfaqëson përmbledhjen më të madhe të historive shqiptare në gjermanisht deri më sot. Ajo bazohet në koleksione të hershme dhe antologji të studiuesve gjermanofolës, shumë prej tyre gjuhëtarë, të cilëve u duhej dhe regjistruan material të shkruar të pa falsifikuar për hulumtimet e tyre në gjuhën shqipe
- Kjo gjithashtu përfshin përkthimet më të hershme të gjuhëve të huaja të përrallave shqiptare.
- Qysh në vitin 1848, Nënkonsulli austriak në Janinë, Johann Georg von Hahn (1811-1869), i cili lindi në Frankfurt të Mainit, mblodhi përralla nga zona e Gjirokastrës. Në ishullin e atëhershëm shqipfolës Poros, në jugperëndim të Athinës, ai regjistroi përralla të mëtejshme rreth vitit 1862. Më 2 gusht 1863, pak para udhëtimit të tij të madh në Shqipëri, von Hahn i shkruajti historianit skocez dhe filhelikut George Finlay (1799-1875), i cili po qëndronte në Plaka, lagjja shqiptare e Athinës: "Unë nuk kam dëgjuar për koleksionin tim të përrallave për shumë kohë, por dyshoj që shtypja e tyre, nëse nuk është përfunduar, duhet të jetë afër fundit të saj. Kështu që shpresoj të jem në gjendje ta dërgoj atë më së voni në kthimin tim, nëse kam vendosur ta bëj këtë. "Shpejt më pas, përrallat e para shqiptare u shfaqën në gjermanisht në veprën e tij me dy vëllime, Përrallat Greke dhe Shqiptare (Leipzig 1864)





Nicholas Bethell
The Albanian Operation of the CIA and MI6, 1949-1953

- Introduction

- Kim Philby (1912-1988), a high-ranking British intelligence officer and, at the same time, a spy for the Soviet Union, is one of the most fascinating figures in the murky history of twentieth-century espionage. He was at war with the British establishment, of which he was himself an integral part. Among his victims, in very concrete terms, were hundreds of Albanians. This book provides insight into the so-called Albanian Operation carried out by the British and American secret services in the years 1949-1953 to infiltrate communist Albania and topple the hermetic Stalinist regime that had seized power there. It focuses on conversations and interviews with the people who actually took part in the Operation in one way or another: British and American officials, and Albanian fighters who infiltrated Albania and escaped alive.

1809 – 1810 Lord Byron: Letters on Albania

- British poet, Lord George Gordon Byron (1788-1824), set out on a grand tour of the Mediterranean in 1809, in the course of which he visited Spain, Malta, Albania, Greece and Asia Minor. His visit to Albania in the autumn of that year made a lasting impression on him and is reflected in the second canto of the poem "Childe Harold's Pilgrimage," that catapulted him to fame as a writer in 1812. The first letter here, written to his mother from Albania, betrays much of the excitement he felt on his first journey to the "Orient" and, in particular, at his meeting with the formidable tyrant Ali Pasha of Tepelena (1744-1822), the so-called Lion of Janina. The second letter, written to John Cam Hobhouse (1786-1869), describes his encounter with Veli Pasha, son of Ali Pasha.

1813 Thomas Smart Hughes: Travels in Albania

- *British scholar, historian and travel writer, the Reverend Thomas Smart Hughes (1786-1847) was born at Nuneaton in Warwickshire and was educated at Shrewsbury School and at St John's College, Cambridge. In December 1812, after graduating with a B.A. (1809) and a masters degree (1811), he accepted the post of travelling tutor for the wealthy young Robert Townley Parker (1793-1879) of Cuerdon Hall, Lancashire. For about two years, the two young men travelled through Spain, Italy, Sicily, Greece and Albania. The results of this extensive Mediterranean journey were published in his two-volume "Travels in Sicily, Greece and Albania," London 1820 A second edition of this work, now covering 1,024 pages and illustrated with the drawings of Charles Robert Cockerell (1788-1863), was published in 1830 under the title "Travels in Greece and Albania." Hughes began the Albanian part of his journey in Preveza which at the time marked the border between Albania and Greece, and continued on to Arta and Janina (Ιôannina). The Albania he describes is thus primarily Epirus, the realm of Ali Pasha Tepelena, of whom he leaves us a good biography. From Janina, he then provides us with a detailed account of his excursion to the north of Albania (in modern terms, actually the south of Albania), i.e. to Libohova, Gjirokastra, Kardhiq, Tepelena, Berat, Këlcyra, Përmet, Konitsa and back to Janina, from which the following text (Chapters 9-11) has been taken*

1835 - William Martin Leake - Travels in Northern Greece

- British writer, topographer and diplomat William Martin Leake (1777-1860) received his training at the Royal Military Academy in Woolwich (London). In 1799, he was sent to Constantinople and served with the Ottoman army in Egypt. In September 1804, Leake returned to the Ottoman Empire, this time to assist the provinces of European Turkey in defending themselves against French attacks from Italy. In this connection, he was given instructions to survey the coast of Albania and the Morea (Peleponnese) and to pay particular attention to the general geography of Greece. Of major interest for Albanian studies is his four-volume work "Travels in Northern Greece," London 1835

EDWARD LEAR, "THE ACROCERAUNIAN MOUNTAINS, THE COAST OF ALBANIA," OIL PAINTING, PRIVATE COLLECTION, USA.

In the text, the author makes reference to the Albanians as the majority population in Albania. It is also in the 'Directorium' that a much-quoted phrase about the existence of books in Albania occurs: 'licet Albanenses aliam omnino linguam a latina habeant et diversam, tamen litteram latinam habent in usu et in omnibus suis libris' (The Albanians indeed have a language quite different from Latin, however they use Latin letters in all their books). Though the reference to the existence of the language is clear, that to writing in Albanian is ambiguous. It cannot be said for certain whether the author meant Albanian-language books written in Latin script or simply books written in Latin. The former possibility has of course captured the imagination of subsequent generations of Albanian scholars and the text is often quoted to this end in histories and studies of Albanian literature as evidence.

DR ROBERT ELSIE'S WORK ON THE ALBANIAN CULTURE AND ARTS

Dr. Robert Elsie ka sjellë një koleksion të Arteve të Bukura Shqiptare në faqen e tij të internetit. Ai jep një dëshmi të mrekullueshme të pikturave më të mira shqiptare që nga fillimi dhe konsiderohet si një kontribut unik në historinë tonë të artit.

PUNA E DR. ROBERT ELSIE PWR KULTURWN DHE ARTET SHQIPTARE

Dr. Robert Elsie has brought a collection of fine Albanian Arts to his own website. It gives a wonderful evidence of the best Albanian paintings from the very beginning and is considered as a unique contribution to our art history.

Woman in Basket 1870, Marubi/ Man from Dukagjini, Kel Marubi, 1890 – 1919, Djalosh nga Dukagjini, Shan Pici, 1929, Cin Deda, 1897,

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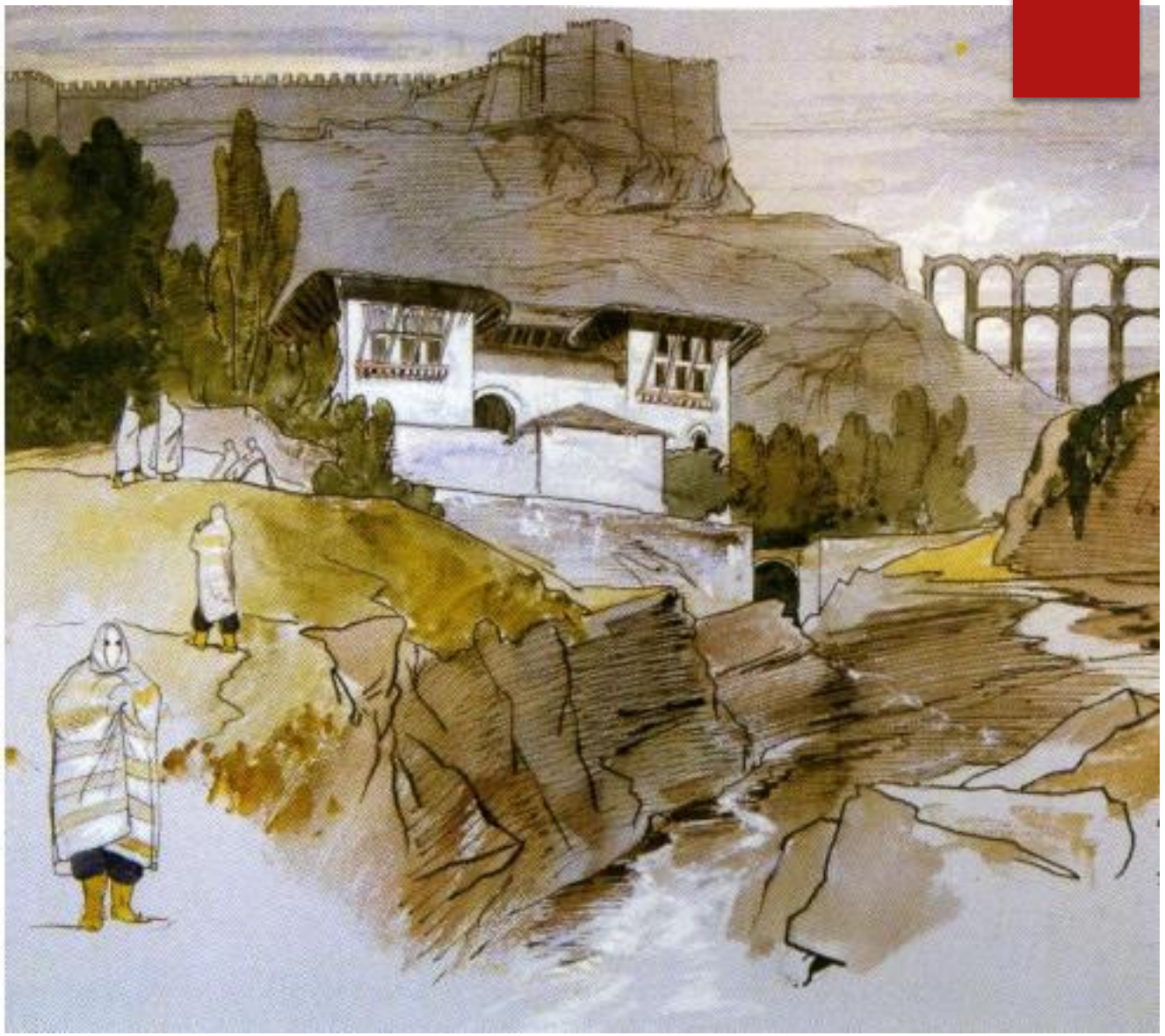


Albanian

1809 John Hobhouse: A Meeting with Ali Pasha in Tepelena

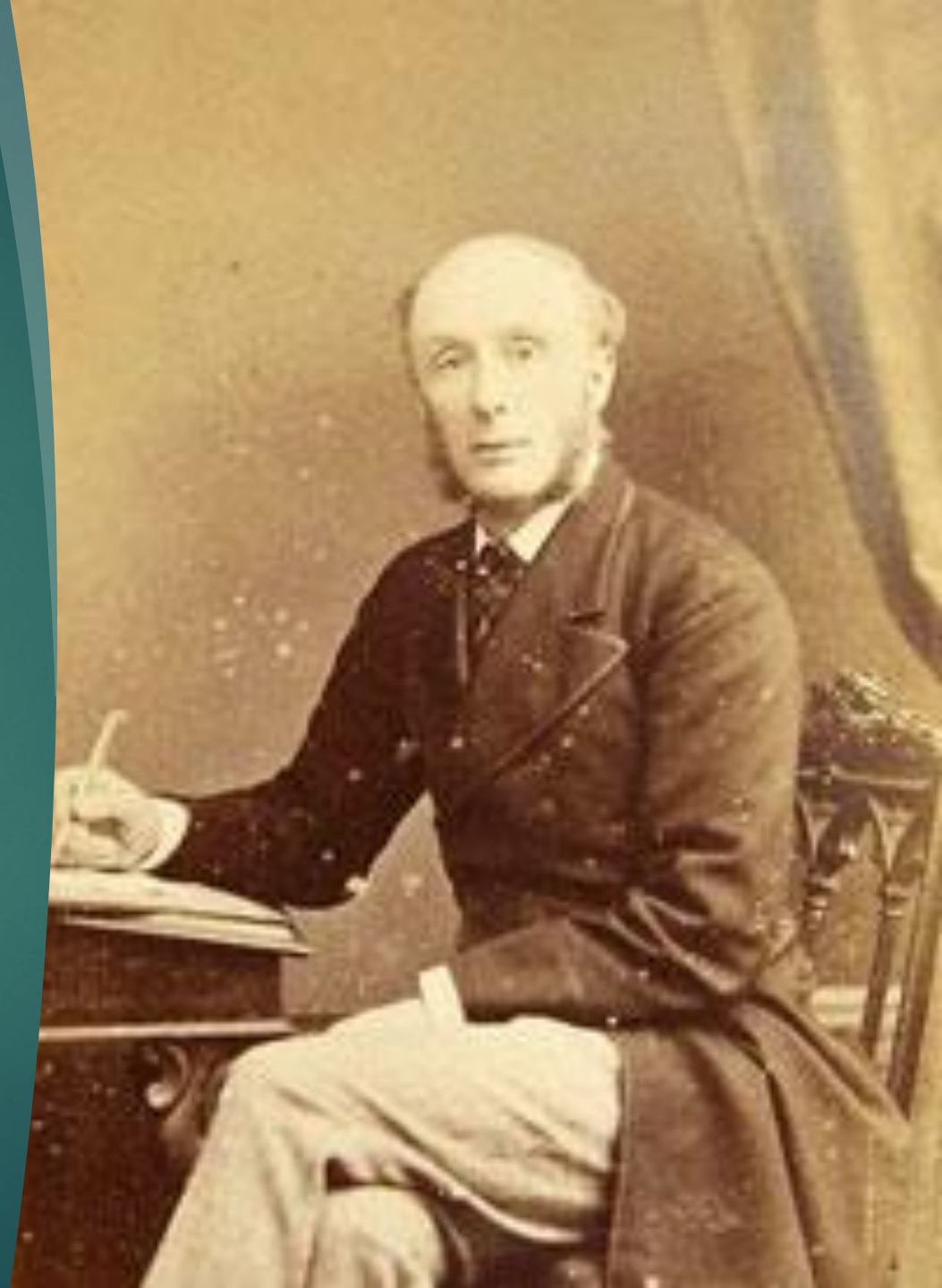
British traveller and writer, John Cameron Hobhouse (1786-1869), also known as Lord Broughton, was born near Bristol. He was educated at Westminster School and attended Trinity College, Cambridge, where he founded the Whig Club and an Amicable Society. It was at Cambridge that he met and became an intimate friend of the poet Lord Byron, with whom he travelled in 1809-1810 to Albania, Greece and Turkey, in particular to Janina (Ioannina)

1812 Peter Oluf Brønsted: Interviews with Ali Pacha of Joanina

- Danish archaeologist Peter Oluf Brønsted (1780-1842) was born in Fruering near Aarhus in Denmark and studied theology and philology at the University of Copenhagen. In 1806, he and his friend Georg Koës (1782-1811) set out on a grand European tour that finally led them to Greece and Albania. In Rome in 1809, they met the German architect Carl Haller von Hallerstein (1774-1817) from Nuremberg, landscape painter Jacob Linckh (1786-1841) from Württemberg, and painter and art historian Baron Otto Magnus von Stackelberg (1786-1837) from Tallinn (Estonia) with whom they planned an expedition to Greece to carry out a detailed description of the country. They arrived in Greece in 1810 where Brønsted met Charles Robert Cockerell (1788-1863) and Lord Byron.

1812 – 1813 Henry Holland: Travels in the dominions of Ali Pasha

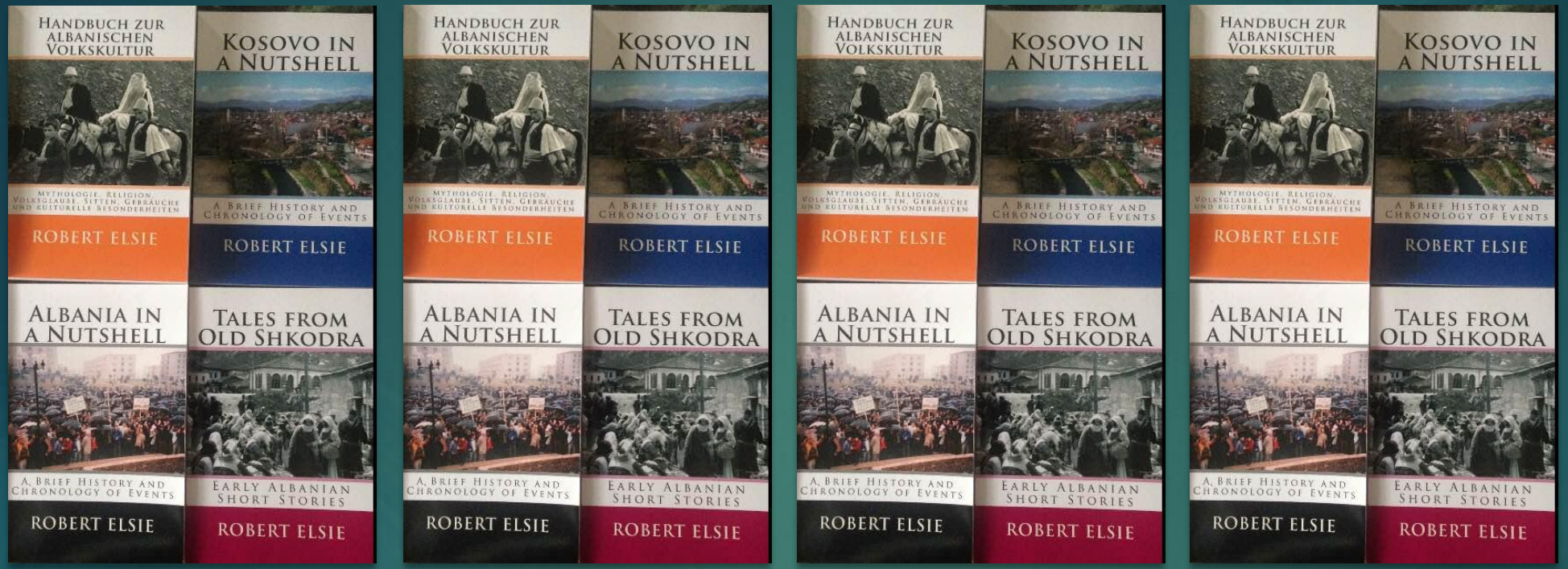
- *British physician and writer, Sir Henry Holland (1788-1873), was born in Knutsford, Cheshire. He obtained a medical degree in Edinburgh in 1811 and later served as physician to the Princess of Wales (Queen Caroline) and to Queen Victoria. As President of the Royal Institution of Great Britain, he seems to have been a well-known figure of London society, and lived from the 1820s to his death in 1873 in Brook Street, Grosvenor Square. Holland was a passionate traveller from an early age. He is, at any rate, remembered as a travel writer - for the journal of his voyage to Iceland in 1810 and, in particular, for his book "Travels in the Ionian Isles, Albania, Thessaly, Macedonia, etc. during the Years 1812-1813" (London 1815), from which the following excerpts are taken. Holland offers here a detailed biography of Ali Pasha and a fascinating account of his meeting with the tyrant, as well as a description of his journey from Ioannina (Janina) to Tepelena. Modern place names are added here in square brackets.*



15/05/2013-Presidenti Nishani dekoron zotin Robert Elsie me "Medaljen e Mirënjohjes"

- Presidenti i Republikës, Bujar Nishani i akordoi dt. 30/04/2013, nr. dekreti 8141 zotit Robert Elsie "Medaljen e Mirënjohjes" me motivacionin:

- "Një ndër albanologët më të shquar, me një vepër të gjërë dhe të thellë, që, përmes një pune plot pasion dhe profesionalizëm, për më shumë se tridhjet vjet, ka dhënë një kontribut të çmuar në promovimin ndërkombëtar të kulturës, gjuhës, letërsisë dhe historisë së shqiptarëve".



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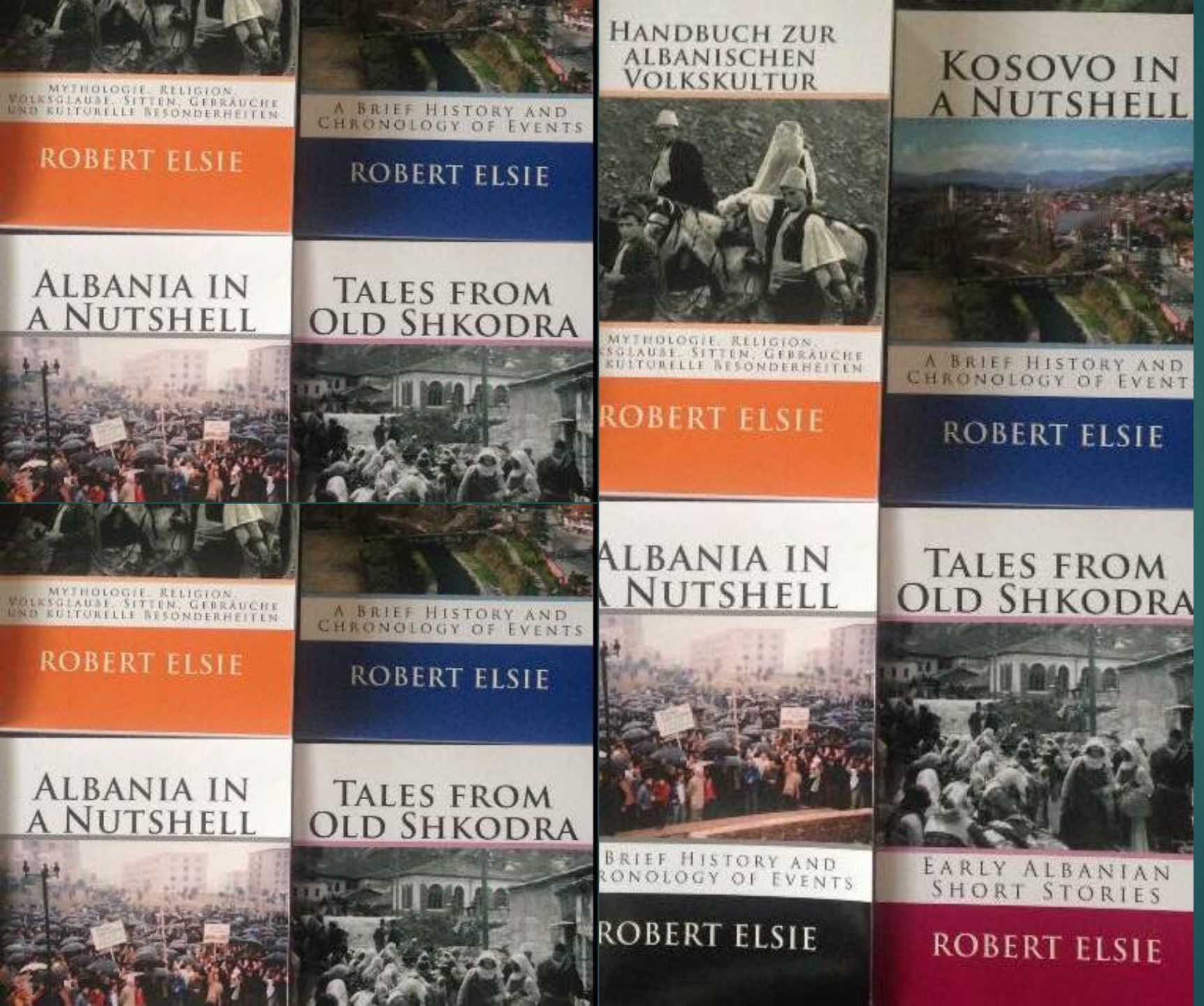

A SET OF BOOKS DONATED BY DR. ROBERT ELSIE, ALL AUTOGRAPHED BY HIM, LONDON, 2015

LONDËR, PËRPARA AMBASADËS SHQIPTARE ME DR. ELSIE DHE STUDIUESIN BEJTULLAH DESTANI, 2015

ME DR. ROBERT ELSIE, DUKE POZUAR PËRPARA BUSTIT TË SKËNDERBEUT NË SHESHIN LADY SAMUEL, NË 113 INVERNESS TERRACE, W2 LONDËR, MBRETËRIA E BASHKUAR

WITH DR. ROBERT ELSIE, POSING BEFORE THE SCANDERBEG'S BUST AT THE LADY SAMUEL SQUARE, AT THE 113 INVERNESS TERRACE, W2 LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM

LONDON, IN FRONT OF THE ALBANIAN EMBASSY, WITH DR. ELSIE AND THE SCHOLAR, MR BEJTULLAH DESTANI, 2015

A PASSION FOR THETH – ALBANIAN RUGGED SHANGRI - LA

- Theth is a small settlement of the Shala Valley in the northern Albanian Alps. It is not far from Shkodra, but in reality it is a world away.. Heavy snow blocks the pass in winter and leaves Theth in splendid isolation, sometimes for weeks on end. Though it is one of the remotest corners of Europe, Theth has never failed to attract visitors. Edith Durham was in her element when she visited the valley in 1908, as were the Austro-Hungarian scholars Karl Steinmetz and Baron Franz Nopcsa, and the American writer Rose Wilder Lane. During the long years of the Stalinist regime that isolated Albania from the rest of the world (1944-1991), few foreigners were allowed into the valley due to its proximity to the Montenegrin border.

- Things have changed in the last few years. Theth has become a unique, yet still little-known holiday destination for a hardy breed on travellers – hikers, mountain-climbers and visitors with a spirit of adventure. A Passion for Theth: Albania's Rugged Shangri-La presents the beauties of Theth and the northern Albanian Alps in the stunning colour photos of photographer Zonderland. Elsie and Mulder introduce the region with the writings of the early explorers and travellers to the valley to the accompaniment of old photographs of the period.

Varri i Robert Elsit në fshatin Theth

Në Theth, në nderim të mikut të madh të shqiptarëve, Robert Elsie

Në Theth,
në nderim të
mikut të madh
të shqiptarëve,
Robert Elsie

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